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SOLOMON  
AND  
SOLOMONIC LITERATURE

BY  
MONCURE DANIEL CONWAY



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INSCRIBED  
TO MY BROTHER OMARIANS  
OF THE  
OMAR KHAYYÁM CLUB  
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*"Seek the circle of the wise: flee a thousand leagues from men without wit. If a wise man give thee poison, drink it without fear; if a fool proffer an antidote, spill it on the ground."*



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## PREFACE.

An English lady of my acquaintance, sojourning at Baalbek, was conversing with an humble stonecutter, and pointing to the grand ruins inquired, "Why do you not occupy yourself with magnificent work like that?" "Ah," he said, "those edifices were built by no mortal, but by genii."

These genii now represent the demons which in ancient legends were enslaved by the potency of Solomon's ring. Some of these folk-tales suggest the ingenuity of a fabulist. According to one, Solomon outwitted the devils even after his death, which occurred while he was leaning on his staff and superintending the reluctant labors of the demons on some sacred edifice. In that posture his form remained for a year after his death, and it was not until a worm gnawed the end of his staff, causing his body to fall, that the demons discovered their freedom.

If this be a fable, a modern moral may be found by reversing the delusion. The general world has for ages been working on under the spell of Solomon while believing him to be dead. Solomon is very much alive. Many witnesses of his talismanic might can be summoned from the homes and schools wherein the rod is not spared, however much it spoils the child, and where youth's "flower of age" bleaches in a puritan cell because the "wisest of men" is supposed to have testified that all earth's pleasures are vanity. And how many

parents are in their turn feeling the recoil of the rod, and live to deplore the intemperate thirst for "vanities" stimulated in homes overshadowed by the fear-of-God wisdom for which Solomon is also held responsible? On the other hand, what parson has not felt the rod bequeathed to the sceptic by the king whom Biblical authority pronounces at once the worldliest and the wisest of mankind?

More imposing, if not more significant, are certain picturesque phenomena which to-day represent the bifold evolution of the Solomonic legend. While in various parts of Europe "Solomon's Seal," survival from his magic ring, is the token of conjuring and fortune-telling impostors, the knightly Order of Solomon's Seal in Abyssinia has been raised to moral dignity by an emperor (Menelik) who has given European monarchs a lesson in magnanimity and gallantry by presenting to a "Queen of the South" (Margharita), on her birthday, release of the captives who had invaded his country. While this is the tradition of nobility which has accompanied that of lineal descent from the Wise Man, his name lingers in the rest of Christendom in proverbial connexion with any kind of sagacity, while as a Biblical personality he is virtually suppressed.

In one line of evolution,—whose historic factors have been Jahvism, Pharisaism, and Puritanism,—Solomon has been made the Adam of a second fall. His Eves gave him the fruit that was pleasant and desirable to make one wise, and he did eat. Jahveh retracts his compliments to Solomon, and makes the naïve admission that deity itself cannot endow a man with the wisdom that can ensure orthodoxy, or with knowledge

impregnable by feminine charms (Nehemiah xiii.); and from that time Solomon disappears from canonical Hebrew books except those ascribed to his own authorship.

That some writings attributed to Solomon,—especially the “Song of Songs” and “Kohelah” (Ecclesiastes),—were included in the canon, may be ascribed to a superstitious fear of suppressing utterances of a supernatural wisdom, set as an oracle in the king and never revoked. This view is confirmed and illustrated in several further pages, but it may be added here that the very idolatries and alleged sins of Solomon led to the detachment from his personal self of his divinely-conferred Wisdom, and her personification as something apart from him in various avatars (preserving his glory while disguising his name), an evolution culminating in ideals and creeds that have largely moulded Christendom.

The two streams of evolution here suggested, one issuing from the wisdom books, the other from the law books, are traceable in their collisions, their periods of parallelism, and their convergence,—where, however, their respective inspirations continue distinguishable, like the waters of the Missouri and the Mississippi after they flow between the same banks.

The present essays by no means claim to have fully traced these lines of evolution, but aim at their indication. The only critique to which it pretends is literary. The studies and experiences of many years have left me without any bias concerning the contents of the Bible, or any belief, ethical or religious, that can be affected by the fate of any scripture under the higher

or other criticism. But my interest in Biblical literature has increased with the perception of its composite character ethnically. I believe that I have made a few discoveries in it; and a volume adopted as an educational text-book requires every ray of light which any man feels able to contribute to its interpretation.



# SOLOMONIC LITERATURE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### SOLOMON.

There is a vast Solomon mythology: in Palestine, Abyssinia, Arabia, Persia, India, and Europe, the myths and legends concerning the traditional Wisest Man are various, and merit a comparative study they have not received. As the name Solomon seems to be allegorical, it is not possible to discover whether he is mentioned in any contemporary inscription by a real name, and the external and historical data are insufficient to prove certainly that an individual Solomon ever existed.\* But that a great personality now known under that name did exist, about three thousand years ago, will, I believe, be recognised by those who study the ancient literature relating to him. The earliest and most useful documents for such an investigation are: the first collection of Proverbs, x-xxii. 16; the second collection, xxv-xxix. 27; Psalms ii., xlv., lxxii., evidently Solomonic; 2 Samuel xii. 24, 25; and 1 Kings iv. 29-34.

As, however, the object of this essay is not to prove the existence of Solomon, but to study the evolution of

\* The name given to him in 2 Sam. xii. 25, Jedidiah ("beloved of Jah"), by the prophet of Jahveh, is, however, an important item in considering the question of an actual monarch behind the allegorical name, especially as the writer of the book, in adding "for Jahveh's sake" seems to strain the sense of the name—somewhat as the name "Jesus" is strained to mean *saviour* in Matt. i. 21. Jedidiah looks like a Jahvist modification of a real name (see p. 20).

the human heart and mind under influences of which a peculiar series is historically associated with his name, he will be spoken of as a genuine figure, the reader being left to form his own conclusion as to whether he was such, if that incidental point interests him.

The indirect intimations concerning Solomon in the Proverbs and Psalms may be better understood if we first consider the historical books which profess to give an account of his career. And the search naturally begins with the passage in the Book of Kings just referred to :

“And God gave Solomon wisdom and intelligence exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand on the seashore. And Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. He spake three thousand parables, and his songs were a thousand and five. He spake of trees, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, birds, reptiles, fishes. And there came people of all countries to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.”

This passage is Elohist: it is the Elohim—perhaps here the gods—who gave Solomon wisdom. The introduction of Jahveh as the giver, in the dramatic dream of Chapter iii., alters the nature of the gift, which from the Elohim is scientific and literary wisdom, but from Jahveh is political, related to government and judgment.

As for Mahol and his four sons, the despair of Biblical historians, they are now witnesses that this passage was written when those men,—or perhaps masculine

Muses,—were famous, though they are unknown within any period that can be called historical. As intimated, they may be figures from some vanished mythology Hebraised into Mahol (*dance*), Ethan (*the imperishable*), Heman (*faithful*), Calcol (*sustenance*), Darda (*pearl of knowledge*).

In speaking of 1 Kings iv. 29-34 as substantially historical it is not meant, of course, that it is free from the extravagance characteristic of ancient annals, but that it is the nearest approach to Solomon's era in the so-called historical books, and, although the stage of idealisation has been reached, is free from the mythology which grew around the name of Solomon.

But while we have thus only one small scrap of even quasi-historical writing that can be regarded as approaching Solomon's era, the traditions concerning him preserved in the Book of Kings yield much that is of value when comparatively studied with annals of the chroniclers, who modify, and in some cases omit, not to say suppress, the earlier record. Such modifications and omissions, while interesting indications of Jahvist influences, are also testimonies to the strength of the traditions they overlay. The pure and simple literary touchstone can alone be trusted amid such traditions; it alone can distinguish the narratives that have basis, that could not have been entirely invented.

In the Book of Chronicles,—for the division into two books was by Christians, as also was the division of the Book of Kings,—we find an ecclesiastical work written after the captivity, but at different periods and by different hands; it is in the historic form, but really does not aim at history. The main purpose of the first chronicler is to establish certain genealogies and con-

quests related to the consecration of the house and lineage of David. Solomon's greatness and his building of the temple are here transferred as far as possible to David.\* David captures from various countries the gold, silver, and brass, and dedicates them for use in the temple, which he plans in detail, but which Jahveh forbade him to build himself. The reason of this prohibition is far from clear to the first writer on the compilation, but apparently it was because David was not sufficiently highborn and renowned. "I took thee from the sheepcote," says Jahveh, but adds, "I will make thee a name like unto the name of the great ones that are in the earth;" also, says Jahveh, "I will subdue all thine enemies." So it is written in I Chronicles xvii., and it could hardly have been by the same hand that in xxii. wrote David's words to Solomon:

"It was in my heart to build an house to the name of Jahveh my God; but the word of Jahveh came to me, saying: "Thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight; behold a son shall be born unto thee who shall be a man of rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon [Peaceful], and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days: he shall build an house for my name: and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.'"

In Chapter xvii. Jahveh claims that it is he who has subdued and cut off David's enemies; his long speech is that of a war-god; but in the xxii. it is the God of Peace who speaks; and in harmony with this character

\* This was continued in rabbinical and Persian superstitions, which attribute to David knowledge of the language of birds. It is said David invented coats of mail, the iron becoming as wax in his hands; he subjected the winds to Solomon, and also a pearl-diving demon.

all the bloodshed by which Solomon's succession was accompanied, as recorded in the Book of Kings, is suppressed, and he stands to the day of his death the Prince of Peace. To him (1 Chron. xxviii., xxix.) from the first all the other sons of David bow submissively, and the people by a solemn election confirm David's appointment and make Solomon their king.

Thus, 1 Chron. xvii., which is identical with 2 Sam. vii., clearly represents a second Chronicler. The hand of the same writer is found in 1 Chron. xviii., xix., xx., and the chapters partly identical in 2 Samuel, namely viii., x., xi.; the offence of David then being narrated in 2 Samuel xii. as the wrong done Uriah, whereas in 1 Chron. xxi. the sin is numbering Israel. The Chroniclers know nothing of the Uriah and Bathsheba story, but the onomatopœists may take note of the fact that David's order was to number Israel "from *Beer-sheba* unto Dan."

The first ten chapters of 2 Chronicles seem to represent a third chronicler. Here we find David in the background, and Solomon completely conventionalised, as the Peaceful Prince of the Golden Age. All is prosperity and happiness. Solomon even anticipates the silver millennium: "The king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones." It is only when the fourth chronicler begins (2 Chron. x.), with the succession of Solomon's son Rehoboam, that we are told anything against Solomon. Then all Israel come to the new king, saying, "Thy father made our yoke grievous," and he answers, "My father chastised you with whips, but I with scorpions."

All this is so inconsistent with the accounts in the earlier books of both David and Solomon, that it is

charitable to believe that the third chronicler had never heard the ugly stories about these two canonised kings.

In the First Book of Kings, Solomon is made king against the rightful heir, by an ingenious conspiracy between a wily prophet, Nathan, and a wily beauty, Bathsheba,—Solomon's mother, whom David had obtained by murdering her husband.

It may be remembered here that David had by Bathsheba a son named Nathan (2 Sam. v. 14; 1 Chron. iii. 5), elder brother of Solomon, from whom Luke traces the genealogy of Joseph, father of Jesus, while Matthew traces it from Solomon. It appears curious that the prophet Nathan should have intrigued for the accession of the younger brother rather than the one bearing his own name. It will be seen, however, by reference to 2 Samuel xii. 24, that Solomon was the first legitimate child of David and Bathsheba, the son of their adultery having died. John Calvin having laid it down very positively that "if Jesus was not descended from Solomon, he was not the Christ," some theologians have resorted to the hypothesis that Nathan married an ancestress of the Virgin Mary, and that Luke gives *her* descent, not that of Joseph; but apart from the fact that Luke (iii. 23) begins with Joseph, it is difficult to see how the requirement of Calvin, that Solomon should be the ancestor of Jesus, is met by his mother's descent from Solomon's brother. It is clear, however, from 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25, that this elder brother of Solomon, Nathan, is a myth. Otherwise he, and not Solomon, was the lawful heir to the throne (legitimacy being confined to the sons of David born in Jerusalem), and Jesus would not have been "born King of the Jews" (Matt. i. 2), nor fulfilled the Messianic conditions. It is even

possible that Luke wished to escape the implication of illegitimacy by tracing the descent of Jesus from Solomon's elder brother. But the writer of 1 Kings i. had no knowledge of the Christian discovery that, in the order of legal succession to the throne, the sons of David born before he reigned in Jerusalem were excluded. Adonijah's legal right of succession was not questioned by David (1 Kings i. 6.)

When David was in his dotage and near his end this eldest son (by Haggith), Adonijah, began to consult leading men about his accession, but unfortunately for himself, did not summon Nathan. This slighted "prophet" proposed to Bathsheba that she should go to David and tell him the falsehood that he (David) had once sworn before Jahveh that her son Solomon should reign; "and while you are talking," says Nathan, "I will enter and fulfil" (that was his significant word) "your declaration." The royal dotard could not gainsay two seemingly independent witnesses, and helplessly kept the alleged oath. David announced this oath as his reason,—apparently the only one,—for appointing Solomon. The prince may be credited with being too young to participate in this scheme.

Irregularity of succession and of birth in princes appeals to popular superstition. The legal heir, regularly born, seems to come by mere human arrangement, but the God-appointed chieftain is expected in unexpected ways and in defiance of human laws and even moralities. David, or some one speaking for him, said, "In sin did my mother conceive me," and the contempt in which he was held by his father's other children, and his father's keeping him out of sight till the prophet demanded him (1 Sam. xvi. 11), look as if he, also, may

have been illegitimate. Solomon may have been technically legitimate, but in any case he was the son of an immoral marriage, sealed by a husband's blood. The populace would easily see the divine hand in the elevation of this youth, who seems to have been himself impressed with the like superstition.

Unfortunately, Solomon received his father's last injunctions as divine commands. At the very time when David is pictured by the Chronicler in such a saintly death-bed scene, parting so pathetically with his people, and giving such unctuous and virtuous last counsels to Solomon, he is shown by the historian of Kings pouring into his successor's ear the most treacherous and atrocious directions for the murder of certain persons; among others, of Shimei, whose life he had sworn should not be taken. Shimei had once called David what Jahveh also called him, a man of blood, but afterwards asked his forgiveness. Under a pretence of forgiveness, David nursed his vengeance through many years, and Shimei was now a white-haired man. David's last words addressed to Solomon were these:

"He (Shimei) came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by Jahveh, saying, 'I will not put thee to death with the sword.' Now therefore hold him not guiltless, for thou art a wise man, and wilt know what thou oughtest to do unto him; and thou shalt bring his hoar head down to the grave in blood."

Such, according to an admiring annalist, were the last words uttered by David on earth. He died with a lie in his mouth (for he had sworn to Shimei, plainly, "Thy life shall not be taken"), and with murder (personal and vindictive) in his heart. The book opens with a record that they had tried to revive the aged king



by bringing to him a beautiful damsel; but lust was gone; the only passion that survived even his lust, and could give one more glow to this "man of blood," was vengeance. Two aged men were named by him for death at the hands of Solomon, who could not disobey, this being the last act of the forty years of reign of King David. His dying word was "blood." One would be glad to believe these things mythical, but they are contained in a record which says:

"David did that which was right in the sight of Jahveh and turned not aside from anything that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite."

This traditional incident of getting Uriah slain in order to appropriate his wife, made a deep impression on the historian of Samuel, and suspicious pains are taken (2 Sam. xii.) to prove that the illegitimate son of David and Bathsheba was "struck by Jahveh" for his parents' sin, and that Solomon was born only after the marriage. Even if the youth was legitimate, the adherents of the king's eldest son, Adonijah, would not fail to recall the lust and murder from which Solomon sprang, though the populace might regard these as signs of Jahveh's favor. In the coronation ode (Psalm ii.) the young king is represented as if answering the Legitimists who spoke of his birth not only from an adulteress, but one with a foreign name:

"I will proclaim the decree:  
The Lord said unto me, 'Thou art my son;  
This day have I begotten thee.'"

(It is probable that the name Jahveh was inserted in this song in place of Elohim, and in several other

phrases there are indications that the original has been tampered with.) The lines—

“Kiss the son lest he be angry  
And ye perish straightway.”

and others, may have originated the legendary particulars of plots caused by Solomon's accession, recorded in the Book of Kings, but at any rate the emphatic claim to his adoption by God as His son, by the anointing received at coronation, suggests some trouble arising out of his birth. There is also a confidence and enthusiasm in the language of the court laureate, as the writer of Psalm ii. appears to have been, which conveys an impression of popular sympathy.

It is not improbable that the superstition about illegitimacy, as under some conditions a sign of a hero's heavenly origin, may have had some foundation in the facts of heredity. In times when love or even passion had little connexion with any marriage, and none with royal marriages, the offspring of an amour might naturally manifest more force of character than the legitimate, and the inherited sensual impulses, often displayed in noble energies, might prove of enormous importance in breaking down an old oppression continued by an automatic legitimacy of succession.

In Talmudic books (*Moad Katon*, Vol. 9, col. 2, and *Midrash Rabbah*, ch. 15) it is related that when Solomon was conveying the ark into the temple, the doors shut themselves against him of their own accord. He recited twenty-four psalms, but they opened not. In vain he cried, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates!” But when he prayed, “O Lord God, turn not Thy face from Thine anointed; remember the mercies of David thy

servant" (2 Chron. vi. 42), the gates flew open. "Then the enemies of David turned black in the face, for all knew that God had pardoned David's transgression with Bathsheba." This legend curiously ignores 1 Chron. xxii., which shows that Jahveh had prearranged Solomon's birth and name, and had adopted him before birth. It is one of many rabbinical intimations that David, Bathsheba, Uriah, and Solomon, had become popular divinities,—much like Vulcan, Venus, Mars,—and as such relieved from moral obligations. Jewish theology had to accommodate itself ethically to this popular mythology, and did so by a theory of divine forgiveness; but really the position of Hebrew, as well as Christian, orthodoxy was that lustful David and Bathsheba were mere puppets in the divine plan, and their actions quite consistent with their being souls after Jahveh's own heart.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

It may occur to mythographers that I treat as historical narratives and names that cannot be taken so seriously; but in a study of primitive culture, fables become facts and evidences. A grand harvest awaits that master of mythology and folklore who shall bravely explore the legends of David and Solomon, but in the present essay mythical details can only be dealt with incidentally. Some of these may be considered at the outset.

It is said in 1 Kings i.:

“Now King David was old and stricken in years: and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and cherish him; and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. And the damsel was very fair; and she cherished the king and ministered to him; but the king knew her not.”

That this story is characteristic of lustful David cannot blind us to the fact of its improbability. Whatever may be meant by “the coasts of Israel,” the impression is conveyed of a long journey, and it is hardly credible that so much time should be taken for a moribund monarch. Many interpretations are possible of the

name Abishag, but it is usually translated "Father (or source) of error." However this may be, the story bears a close resemblance to the search for a wife for Isaac. When Abraham sent out this commission he also "was old and well stricken in age," and of Rebekah it is said, "The damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her." (Gen. xxiv.) Rebekah means "ensnarer," and Abishag "father (source) of error"; and both women cause trouble between two brothers.

There is an Oriental accent about both of these stories. In ancient Indian literature there are several instances of servants sent out to search the world for a damsel fair and wise enough to wed the son and heir of some grand personage. Maya, the mother of Buddha, was sought for in the same way. This of itself is not enough to prove that the Biblical narratives in question are of Oriental origin, but there is a Tibetan tale which contains several details which seem to bear on this point. The tale is that of Viśākhā, and it is accessible to English readers in a translation by Schiefner and Ralston of the "Kah-Gyur." (Trübner's Oriental Series.)

Viśākhā was the seventh son of Mrgadhara, prime minister of the king of Kośala. For this youth a bride was sought by a Brahman, who in the land of Champa found a beautiful maiden whose name was also Viśākhā. She was, with other girls, entering a park, where they all bathed in a tank,—her companions taking off their clothes, but Viśākhā lifting her dress by degrees as she entered the water. Besides showing decorum, this maiden conducted herself differently from the others in everything, some of her actions being mysterious. The Brahman, having contrived to meet her alone, ques-

tioned her concerning these peculiarities, for all of which she gave reasons implying exceptional wisdom and virtue. On his return the Brahman described this maiden to the prime minister, who set forth and asked her hand for his son, and she was brought to Kōśāla on a ship with great pomp. The maiden then for a long time gives evidence of extraordinary wisdom, one example being of special importance to our inquiry. She determines which of two women claiming a child is the real mother. The king and his ministers being unable to settle the dispute, Viśākhā said :

“Speak to the two women thus: ‘As we do not know to which of you two the boy belongs, let her who is the strongest take the boy.’ When each of them has taken hold of one of the boy’s hands, and he begins to cry out on account of the pain, the real mother will let go, being full of compassion for him, and knowing that if her child remains alive she will be able to see it again; but the other, who has no compassion for him, will not let go. Then beat her with a switch, and she will thereupon confess the truth of the whole matter.”

In comparing this with the famous judgment of Solomon there appear some reasons for believing the Oriental tale to be the earlier. In the Biblical tale there is evidently a missing link. Why should the false mother, who had so desired the child, consent to have it cut in two? What motive could she have? But in the Tibetan tale one of the women is the wife, the other the concubine, of a householder. The wife bore him no child, and was jealous of the concubine on account of her babe. The concubine, feeling certain that the wife would kill the child, gave it to her, with her lord’s approval; but after his death possession of the house had to follow motherhood of the child. If, however,

the child were dead, the false claimant would be mistress of the house. Here, then, is a motive wanting in the story of Solomon, and suggesting that the latter is not the original.

In the ancient "Mahosadha Jataka" the false claimant proves to be a Yakshini (a sort of siren and vampire) who wishes to eat the child. To Buddha himself is here ascribed the judgment, which is much the same as that of the "wise Champa maiden," Viśākhā. Here, also, is a motive for assenting to the child's death or injury which is lacking in the Biblical story.

Here, then, we find in ancient Indian literature a tale which may be fairly regarded as the origin of the "Judgment of Solomon." And it belongs to a large number of Oriental tales in which the situations and accents of the Biblical narratives concerning David and Solomon often occur. There is a cave-born youth, Aśuga, son of a Brahman and a bird-fairy, with a magic lute which accompanies his verses, and who dallies with Brahmadetta's wife. A king, enamored of a beautiful foreign woman beneath him in rank, obtains her by a promise that her son, if one is born, shall succeed him on the throne, to the exclusion of his existing heir by his wife of equal birth; but he permits arrangements for his elder son's succession to go on until induced by a threat of war from the new wife's father and country to fulfil his promise. A prime minister, Mahaushadha, travels, in disguise of a Brahman, in order to find a true wife; he meets with a witty maiden (Viśākhā), who directs him to her village by a road where he will see her naked at a bathing tank, though she had taken another road. This minister was, like David, lowly born; a "deity" revealed him to the

king, as Jahveh revealed David to Samuel; he was a seventh minister, as David was a seventh son, and Solomon also.

Although the number seven was sacred among the ancient Hebrews, it does not appear to have been connected by them with exceptional wisdom or occult powers in man or woman. The ideas in which such legends as "The Seven Wise Masters," "The Seven Sages," and the superstition about a seventh son's second-sight, originate, are traceable to ancient Indo-Iranian theosophy. It may be useful here to read the subjoined extract from Darmesteter's introduction to the "Vendîdâd." Having explained that the religion of the Persian Magi is derived from the same source as that of the Indian Rishis, that is, from the common forefathers of both Iranian and Indian, he says:

"The Indo-Iranian Asura (the supreme but not the only god) was often conceived as sevenfold: by the play of certain mythical formulæ and the strength of certain mythical numbers, the ancestors of the Indo-Iranians had been led to speak of seven worlds, and the supreme god was often made sevenfold, as well as the worlds over which he ruled. The names and the attributes of the seven gods had not been as yet defined, nor could they be then; after the separation of the two religions, these gods, named Aditya, 'the infinite ones,' in India, were by and by identified there with the sun, and their number was afterward raised to twelve, to correspond to the twelve aspects of the sun. In Persia, the seven gods are known as Amesha Spentas, 'the undying and well-doing one'; they by and by, according to the new spirit that breathed in the religion, received the names of the deified abstractions, Vohu-manô (good thought), Asha Vahista (excellent holiness), Khshathra Vairya (perfect sovereignty), Spenta Armaiti (divine piety), Haurvatât and Ameretâot (health and immortality). The first of them all was and remained Ahura Mazda; but whereas formerly he had been



only the first of them, he was now their father. 'I invoke the glory of the Amesha Spentas, who all seven have one and the same thinking, one and the same speaking, one and the same father and lord, Ahura Mazda.'" (Yast xix. 16.)\*

In Persian religion the Seven are always wise and beneficent. The vast folklore derived from this Parsi religion included the Babylonian belief in seven powerful spirits, associated with the Pleiades, beneficent at certain seasons, but normally malevolent: they all move together, taking possession of human beings, as in the case of the seven demons cast out of Mary Magdalene. In Egypt the seven are always evil. But neither of these sevens are especially clever. In Buddhist legends they are not so carefully classified, the seventh son or daughter manifesting exceptional powers, sometimes of good, sometimes of evil, but they are usually referred to for this wit or wisdom. In the Davidian and Solomonic legends these notions are found as if merely adhering to some importation, and without any perception of the significance of the number seven. David is an eighth son in 1 Sam. xvi. 10-13, but a seventh son in 1 Chron. ii. 16. Solomon is a tenth son in 1 Chron. iii. 1-6, but the seventh *legitimate* son in 2 Sam. xii. 24-25. The word *Sheba* means "the seven," but the early scribes appear to have understood it as *shaba*, "he swears," as in Gen. xxi. 30-31, where after the seven ewe lambs have given the well its name, *Beersheba*, it is ascribed the significance of an oath. *Bathsheba* is commonly translated "Daughter of the Oath," but there can be little doubt that the name means "Daughter of the Seven," and that it originated in the astute tricks

\* *Sacred Books of the East*. Edited by F. Max Müller. Vol. IV. The Zend-Avesta. Part I. The Vendidad. Translated by James Darmesteter. P. lix., et seq.

by which that fair foreigner made herself queen-mother and her son king, above the lawful heir, whom she was instrumental (perhaps purposely) in getting out of the way by furthering his wishes.

Moral obliquities are little considered in these fair favorites of translunary powers. Viśākhā, in one Buddhist tale, gets herself chosen by the Brahman as bride of a great man by her care to veil her charms at the bath; in another tale she attracts a prime minister in disguise, and becomes his wife, partly by laying aside all of her clothing at a bathing tank where she knows he will see her. Bathsheba's fame is similarly various. Her nudity and ready adultery with the king did not prevent her from passing into Talmudic tradition as "blessed among women," and to her was even ascribed the beautiful chapter of Proverbs (xxxii.) in praise of the virtuous wife! In the "Wisdom of Solomon" she is described as the "handmaiden" of the Lord in anticipation of the Christian ideal of immaculate womanhood.

A similar development might no doubt be traced in the beautiful story of Viśākhā of Shravastī, the most famous of the female lay-disciples of Buddha. The queries put to her by Buddha and her explanations of her petitions, which had appeared enigmatic, are related in Carus's *Gospel of Buddha*, and in form correspond with the very different questions and solutions that passed between the Brahman and the Tibetan Viśākhā, already mentioned. The name Viśākhā, from a Sanskrit root, meaning to divide, came to mean selection and intelligence, of all kinds, but in the matron of Shravastī wit becomes the genius of charity, and cleverness expands to enlightenment.

The Queen of Sheba,—“Queen of the Seven,”—is a

sister spirit of this lay-disciple. Whatever truth may underlie the legends of this lady, there is little doubt of her legendary relation to the Wise Women of Buddhist parables,—to Viśākhā of the sevenfold wisdom; and of her who decided between the rival claimants to the same child; to Ambapāli, the courtesan, who journeyed to hear Buddha's wisdom and presented to him and his disciples her park and mansion; and to the Queen of Glory, whose story belongs "to a very early period in the history of Buddhism." Such is the opinion of Mr. Rhys Davids, whose translation of the *Mahāsudassana-Sutta*, containing an account of the queen's visit to the King of Glory, in his Palace of Justice, attended by her fourfold army, may be read in Vol. XI., p. 276, of *Sacred Books of the East*.

This exaltation of human knowledge and wisdom, travelling to find it, testing it with riddles and questions, belongs to the cult of the Magus and the Pundit.

With reference to the seventh son Viśākha (all-potential) and his all-wise bride Viśākhā, a notable parallelism is found in the substantial identity of "Solomon" and "the Shunnamite," on account of whom he slew his brother Adonijah. Shunnamite is equivalent to Shulanite, substantially the same as Solomon (peaceful), but here probably meaning that she was a "Solomoness," a very wise woman. That such was her reputation appears by the "Song of Songs."

An equally striking comparison may be made between the naming of Solomon and the naming of Mahausadha, the Tibetan "Solomon" already mentioned as having married a wise Viśākhā. Among the many proofs of wisdom given by this village-born youth was the discovery of the real husband of a woman claimed

by two men. One of the men being much the weaker, there could be no such trial as that proposed in the child's case by Viśākhā. Mahaushadha questioned the two men as to what they had last eaten, then made them vomit, and so found out which had told the truth. Let us compare this Tibetan minister's birth with that of Solomon :

"When the boy came into the world and his birth-feast was celebrated, the name of Mahaushadha (Great Remedy) was given to him at the request of his mother, inasmuch as she, who had long suffered from illness, and had been unable to obtain relief from the time of the boy's conception, had been cured by him." (*Tib. Tales*, p. 133.)

"And Jahveh struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and . . . on the seventh day [it was the seventh son] the child died. . . . And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her; and she bare a son, and she called his name Solomon. And Jahveh loved him; and he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet, and he called his name Jedidiah [Beloved of Jah] for Jahveh's sake." (2 Sam. xii.)

In the Revised Version "she called" is given in the margin as "another reading," but that it is the right reading appears by the context: it was she that was "comforted," and in her babe she found "rest"—which "Solomon" strictly means. Among the Hebrews the naming of a child was an act of authority, and it is difficult to believe that in any purely Hebrew narrative a woman would be described as setting aside the name given by Jahveh himself. But the high position of woman in the Iranian and the Buddhist religions is well known.

In comparative studies the questions to be determined concerning parallel incidents are—whether they

are trivial coincidences; whether they are not based in such universal beliefs or simple facts that they may have been of independent origin; whether the historic conditions of time and place admit of any supposed borrowing; if borrowing occurred, which is the original? With regard to the above parallelisms I submit that one of them, at least,—the Judgment of Solomon,—is neither trivial nor based in simple facts, and could not have originated independently of the Indian tale; that the others, though each, if it stood alone, might be a mere coincidence, are too numerous to be so explained; that the time and conditions which rendered it possible that the names of the apes and peacocks (1 Kings x. 22) imported by Solomon should be Indian proves the possibility of importations of tales from the same country. (See Rhys David's *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. xlvii.)

The question remaining to be determined—which region was the borrower—cannot be settled, in the present cases, by the relative antiquity of the books in which they are found; not only are the ages of all the books, Hebrew and Oriental, doubtful, but they are all largely made up of narratives long anterior to their compilation. The safest method, therefore, must be study of the intrinsic character of each narrative with a view to discovering the country to whose intellectual and social fauna and flora, so to say, it is most related, and which of the stories bears least of the faults incidental to translation. I have applied this touchstone to the above examples, and believe that the Oriental stories are the originals. The Judgment of Solomon appears to me to have lost an essential link, a *motif*, which it retains in Buddhist versions. And I do not believe that

any Hebrew Bathsheba could have set aside a name given her child by a prophet, in the name of Jahveh, in order to celebrate by another name the "rest" she found from her sorrows.

On the other hand, the borrowings by other countries from the legend of Solomon appear much more numerous. In some cases, as the legend of Jemshid, there appear to have been exchanges between the two great sages, but the Solomonic traditions seem preponderant in Vikramadatsya, the demon-commanding hero of India. Solomon became a proverb of wisdom and liberality in Abyssinia, Arabia, and Persia. Ideal Sulaimans and Solimas abound. Solomon has influenced the legends of many heroes, such as Haroun-Alraschid and Charlemagne, and I will even venture a suspicion that the fame, and perhaps the name, of Solon have been influenced by the legend of Solomon. Lexicographers give no account of Solon's name; he is assigned to a conjectural period before written Greek existed; his interviews with Cræsus, given in Herodotus, are hopelessly unhistorical, and his moralisings to the rich man recall the book of Proverbs. The Solon of Plato's *Critias* is already a mythological voyager, a Sindebad-Solomon, and his romance of the lost Atlantis is like an idealised rumour of the Wise Man's Kingdom. Solon's "history" was developed by Plutarch, seven centuries after the era assigned to the sage, out of poetical fragments ascribed to him, and he is represented as a great trader and traveller in the regions associated with Solomon. It is doubtful whether this chief of the Seven Sages, whose Solomonic motto was "Know Thyself" (cf. Prov. xiv. 8), could he reappear,

would know himself as historically costumed by writers in our era, from Plutarch to Grote.

At any rate there is little doubt of a reference to the Seven Spentas or to the Seven Sages in Proverbs ix. 1 :

“Wisdom hath builded her house,  
She hath hewn out her seven pillars.”

## CHAPTER III.

### THE WIVES OF SOLOMON.

According to the first book of Kings, Solomon's half-brother, Adonijah, after the defeat of an alleged (perhaps mythical) effort to recover the throne of which he had been defrauded, submitted himself to Solomon. He had become enamored of the virgin who had been brought to the aged King David to try to revive some vitality in him; and he came to Bathsheba asking her to request her son the king to give him this damsel as his wife. Bathsheba proffered this "small petition" for Adonijah, but Solomon was enraged, and ironically suggested that she should ask the kingdom itself for Adonijah, whom he straightway ordered to execution. The immediate context indicates that Solomon suspected in this petition a plot against his throne. A royal father's harem was inherited by a royal son, and its possession is supposed to have involved certain rights of succession: this is the only interpretation I have ever heard of the extreme violence of Solomon. But I have never been satisfied with this explanation. Would Adonijah have requested, or Bathsheba asked as a "small" thing, a favor touching the king's tenure?

The story as told in the Book of Kings appears diplomatic, and several details suggest that in some earlier legend the strife between the half-brothers had a more



romantic relation to "Abishag the Shunammite," who is described as "very fair."

Abishag is interpreted as meaning "father of error," and though that translation is of doubtful accuracy, its persistence indicates the place occupied by her in early tradition. According to *Yalkut Reubeni* the soul of Eve transmigrated into her. She caused trouble between the brothers, whose Jahvist names, Adonijah and Jedidiah,—strength of Jah, and love of Jah,—seem to have been at some time related. However this may be, the fair Shunammite, as represented in the Shulamite of the Song of Songs, fills pretty closely the outlines set forth in the famous epithalamium (Psalm xlv.) which all critics, I believe, refer to Solomon's marriage with a bride brought from some far country. I quote (with a few alterations hereafter discussed) the late Professor Newman's translation, in which it will be seen that several lines are applicable to the Shunammite, whose humble position is alluded to, separated from her "people," and her "father's house":

"My heart boils up with goodly matter.  
I ponder; and my verse concerns the King.  
Let my tongue be a ready writer's pen.

"Fairer art thou than all the sons of men.  
Over thy lips delightsomeness is poured:  
Therefore hath God forever blessed thee.

"Gird at thy hip thy hero sword,  
Thy glory and thy majesty:  
And forth victorious ride majestic,  
For truth and meekness, righteously;  
And let thy right hand teach the wondrous deeds.  
Beneath thy feet the peoples fall;  
For in the heart of the king's enemies  
Sharp are thy arrows.

"Thy throne, O God, ever and always stands ;  
 A righteous sceptre is thy royal sceptre.  
 Thou lovest right and hatest evil ;  
 Therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed thee  
 With oil of joy above thy fellow-kings.  
 Myrrh, aloes, cassia, all thy raiment is.  
 From ivory palaces the viols gladden thee.  
 King's daughters count among thy favorites ;  
 And at thy right hand stands the Queen  
     In Gold of Ophir.

"O daughter, hark ! behold and bend thy ear :  
 Forget thy people and thy father's house.  
 Win thou the King thy beauty to desire ;  
 He is thy lord ; do homage unto him.  
 So Tyrus's daughter and the sons of wealth  
     With gifts shall court thee.

"Right glorious is the royal damsel ;  
 Wrought of gold is her apparel.  
 In broidered tissues to the King she is led :  
 Her maiden-friends, behind, are brought to thee.  
 They come with joy and gladness,  
 They enter the royal palace.

"Thy fathers by their sons shall be replaced ;  
 As princes o'er the land shalt thou exalt them.  
 So will I publish to all times thy name ;  
 So shall the nations praise thee, now and always."

In this epithalamium the name of Jahveh does not occur, and Solomon himself is twice addressed as God (Elohim). This lack of anticipation was avenged by Jahvism when it arrived ; the Song was put among the Psalms and transmitted to British Jahvism, which has headed it : "The majesty and grace of Christ's kingdom. The duty of the Church and the benefits thereof." Such is the chapter-heading to a song of bridesmaids,—

described in the original as "a song of loves" and "set to lilies" (a tune of the time).

There are no indications in the Solomon legend, apart from some mistranslations, until the time of Ecclesiasticus (B. C. 180), that Solomon was a sensualist, or that there were any moral objections to the extent of his harem, which indeed is expanded by his historians with evident pride.

As to this, our own monogamic ideas are quite inapplicable to a period when personal affection had nothing to do with marriage, when women had no means of independent subsistence, and the size of a man's harem was the measure of his benevolence. Probably there was then no place more enviable for a woman than Solomon's seraglio.

The sin was not in the size of the seraglio but in its foreign and idolatrous wives. (Here our translators again get in an innuendo against Solomon by turning "foreign" into "strange women.") Before a religious notion can get itself fixed as law it is apt to be enforced by an extra amount of odium. Solomon's mother had married a Hittite, and presumably he would have imbibed liberal ideas on such subjects. The round number of a thousand ladies in his harem is unhistorical, but that the chief princesses were of Gentile origin and religion is clear. The second writer in the first Book of Kings begins (xi.) with this gravamen:

"Now King Solomon loved many foreign women besides the daughter of Pharaoh,—Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Zidonian, and Hittite women, nations concerning which Jahveh said to the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave to these in love."

The wisest of men could hardly attend to rules which an unconceived Jahveh would lay down for an unborn nation centuries later. We must, however, as we are not on racial problems, consent to a few anachronisms in names if we are to discover any credible traditions in the Biblical books relating to Solomon. As Mr. Flinders Petrie has discovered something like the word "Israel" in ancient Egypt, it may be as well to use that word tentatively for the tribe we are considering. No Israelite, then, is mentioned among Solomon's wives, and one can hardly imagine such a man finding a bride among devotees of an altar of unhewn stones piled in a tent.

As our cosmopolitan prince had to send abroad for workmen of skill, he may also have had to seek abroad for ladies accomplished enough to be his princesses. That, however, does not explain the number and variety of the countries from which the wives seem to have come. The theory of many scholars that this Prince of Peace substituted alliances by marriage for military conquests is confirmed in at least one instance. The mother of his only son, Rehoboam, was Naamah the Ammonitess (1 Kings xiv. 31), and the Septuagint preserves an addition to this verse that she was the "daughter of Ana, the son of Nahash,"—a king (Hanum) with whom David had waged furious war. The reference in the epithalamium (Psalms xlv.) to "Tyrus's daughter," in connexion with 1 Kings v. 12, "there was peace between Hiram and Solomon," suggests that there also marriage was the peacemaker.

The phrase in 1 Kings iii. 1, "Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh and took Pharaoh's daughter" suggests, though less clearly, that some feud may have been

settled in that case also. That Solomon should have espoused as his first and pre-eminent queen the daughter of a Pharaoh is very picturesque if set beside the legend of the "Land of Bondage," but the narrative could hardly have been given without any allusion to bygones had the story in Exodus been known. Yet the words "made affinity" may refer to a racial feud in that direction. This princess brought as her dowry the important frontier city of Gezer, and her palace appears to have been the first fine edifice erected in Jerusalem.

The commercial régime established by Solomon could hardly have been possible but for his intermarriages. Perhaps if the Christian ban had not been fixed against polygamy, and European princes had been permitted to marry in several countries, there might have been fewer wars, as well as fewer illicit connexions. The intermarriages of the large English royal family with most of the reigning houses of Europe, have been for many years a security of peace, and it is not improbable that our industrial and democratic age, wherein the working man's welfare depends on peace, may find in the undemocratic institution of royalty a certain utility in its power to be prolific in such ties of peace.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SOLOMON'S IDOLATRY.

Bathsheba's function at Solomon's marriage is celebrated in the Song of Songs :

"Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon,  
With the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the  
day of his espousals."

Bathsheba, as we have seen, was said to have written Proverbs xxxi. as an admonition or reproof to her son on his betrothal with the daughter of Pharaoh. The words of David, "Send me Uriah the Hittite" (2 Sam. xi. 6), and the emphasis laid on Uriah's being a Hittite (a race with which intermarriage was prohibited, Deut. vii. 1-5) might have been meant as some legal excuse for David's conduct. He rescued Bathsheba, Hebraised (1 Chr. iii. 5), from unlawful wedlock, it might be said, and her exaltation in Talmudic tradition may have been meant to guard the purity of David's lineage. But the ascription to Bathsheba of especial opposition to her son's marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh indicates that the gravamen in Solomon's posthumous offence lay less in his intermarriage with foreigners than in building for them shrines of their several deities,—Istar, Chemosh, Milcom, and the rest. Against Pharaoh's daughter the Talmud manifests a special animus: she is said to have introduced to Solo-

mon a thousand musical instruments, and taught him chants to the various idols. (*Shabbath*, 56, col. 2.)

There is a bit of Solomonic folklore according to which the Devil tempted him with a taunt that he would be but an ordinary person but for his magic ring, in which lay all his wisdom. Solomon being piqued into a denial, was challenged to remove his ring, but no sooner had he done so than the Devil seized it, and, having by its might metamorphosed the king beyond recognition, himself assumed the appearance of Solomon and for some time resided in the royal seraglio. The more familiar legend is that Solomon was cajoled into parting with his signet ring by a promise of the demon to reveal to him the secret of demonic superiority over man in power. Having transformed Solomon and transported him four hundred miles away, the demon (Asmodeus) threw the ring into the sea. Solomon, after long vagrancy, became the cook of the king of Ammon (Ano Hanun), with whose daughter, Naamah, he eloped.\* One day in dressing a fish for dinner Naamah found in it the signet ring which Asmodeus had thrown into the sea, and Solomon thus recovered his palace and harem from the demon.

The connexion of this fish-and-ring legend,—known in several versions, from the Ring of Polycrates (Herodotus III.) to the heraldic legend of Glasgow,—with the Solomonic demonology, looks as if it may once have been part of a theory that the idolatrous shrines were built for the princesses while the Devil was personating their lord. In truth, however, all of these animadver-

\* "Ammon" probably developed the name "Amina," given in the Talmud as the name of a favorite concubine of Solomon, to whom, while he was bathing, he entrusted his signet ring, and from whom the Devil, Sakhar, obtained it by appearing to her in the shape of Solomon. This is the version referred to in the Koran, chapter xxxviii. (Sale.)

sions belong to a comparatively late period. Many struggles had to precede even the recognition of the idolatrous character of the shrines, and to the last the Jews were generally proud of the "graven images" in their temple,—including brazen reproductions of the terrible Golden Calf. At the same time there were no doubt some old priests and soothsayers to whom these new-fangled things were injurious and odious, and superstitious people enough to cling to their ancient unhewn altar rather than to the brilliant cherubim, just as in Catholic countries the devotees cannot be drawn from their age-blackened Madonnas and time-stained crucifixes by the most attractive works of modern art.

Although there is no evidence that the God of Israel was known under the name of either Jah or Jahveh in Solomon's time, there is little doubt that the rudimentary forces of Jahvism were felt in the Solomonic age. The furious prophetic denunciations of the wise and learned which echoed on through the centuries, and made the burden of St. Paul, indicate that there was from the first much superstition among the peasantry, which might easily in times of distress be fanned into fanaticism. The special denunciation of Solomon by Jahveh, and his suppression during the prophetic age, could hardly have been possible but for some extreme defiance on his part of the primitive priesthood and the soothsayers. The temple was dedicated by the king himself without the help of any priest, and the monopoly of the prophet was taken away by the establishment of an oracle in the temple. And the worst was that these things indicated a genuine liberation of the king, intellectually, from the superstitions out of which Jahvism grew. This was especially proved by his dis-



regard of the sanctuary claimed by the murderer Joab, who had laid hold of the horns of the altar. The altar was the precinct of deity, and beyond the jurisdiction of civil or military authority; yet when the "man of blood" refused to leave the altar our royal forerunner of Erasmus compelled the reluctant executioner to slay him at the altar,—even the sacred altar of unhewn stone. As no thunderbolt fell from heaven on the king for this sacrilege, the act could not fail to be a thunderbolt from earth striking the phantasmal heaven of the priest. The Judgment Day for settlement of such accounts was not yet invented, and injuries of the gods were left to the vengeance of their priests and prophets.

There is an unconscious humour in the solemn reading by English clergymen of Jahvist rebukes of Solomon for his tolerance towards idolatry, at a time when the Queen of England and Empress of India is protecting temples and idols throughout her realm, and has just rebuilt the ancient temple of Buddha at Gâya; while the sacred laws of Brahman, Buddhist, Parsee, Moslem, are used in English courts of justice. If any modern Josiah should insult a shrine of Vishnu, or of any Hindu deity, he would have to study his exemplar inside a British prison.

## CHAPTER V.

### SOLOMON AND THE SATANS.

When Solomon ascended the throne, Jerusalem must have been a wretched place, without any art or architecture, with a swarming mongrel population, mainly of paupers. The holy ark was kept in a tent, and the altar of unhewn stone accurately symbolised the rude condition of the people, among whom Solomon could find no workmen of skill enough to build a temple. It is not easy to forgive him for compelling a good many of them into the public works; but it was probably no more than a national conscription of the unemployed paupers in Jerusalem, chiefly on fortifications for their own defence. There was apparently no slave-mart, and it seems rather better to conscript people for public industries than, in our modern way, for cutting their neighbors' throats. Most of them were the remnants of tribes that once occupied the region, much despised by the Israelites, and probably they looked on Solomon's plan of building Jerusalem into a city of magnificence, giving everybody employment and support, as a grand socialistic movement. An Ephraimite, Jeroboam, who tried to get up a revolt in Jerusalem does not seem to have found any adherents. The only people who complained of any yoke—and their complaint is only heard of after some centuries—were the priest-ridden and prophet-ridden Israelites who had become

fanatically excited about the strange shrines built for the king's foreign wives, and the splendid carvings and forms in the temple itself. Probably the first two commandments in the decalogue were put there with special reference to some Solomonic cult with an æsthetic taste for graven images and foreign shrines.

There can be little doubt that Solomon, by his patronage of these foreign religions, detached them from the cruel rites traditionally associated with them. Among all the censures pronounced against him none attributes to him any human sacrifices, though such are ascribed to David and Samuel. (1 Sam. xv. 33, 2 Sam. xxi. 9.) The earliest rebukes of sacrifice in the Bible are those attributed to Solomon. "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice" (Prov. xxi. 3). "By mercy and truth iniquity is atoned for" (Prov. xvi. 6). "Mercy and truth preserve the king; he upholdeth his throne by mercy" (Prov. xx. 28). "Deliver them that are carried away to death: those that are ready to be slain forbear not thou to save" (Prov. xxiv. 11). "Love covereth all transgressions" (Prov. x. 12).

Solomon may not indeed have written these and the many similar maxims ascribed to him, but they are among the most ancient sentences in the Bible, and they would not have been attributed to any man who had not left among the people a tradition of humanity and benevolence. Had the royal "idolator" or his wives stained their shrines with human blood the prophets would have been eager to declare it. Two acts of cruelty are ascribed to Solomon's youth, in the book of Kings: one of these, the execution of Shimei, carried out his father's order, but only after Shimei had been

given fair warning with means of escape; while the other, the execution of Adonijah (Solomon's brother), if true, is too much wrapped up in obscurity to enable us to judge its motives; but it cannot be regarded as historical.

The second historiographer of Kings, setting out to record Jahveh's anger about Solomon's foreign wives and shrines (1 Kings xi) says, with unconscious humour, that Jahveh raised Satan against him,—two Satans. One of these was Hadad, an Edomite, the other Rezon, a Syrian. The writer says that this was when Solomon was old, his wives having then turned away his heart after other gods. Fortunately, however, this writer has embodied in his record some items, evidently borrowed, which contradict his Jahvistic legend. One of these tells us that Hadad had been carried away from Edom to Egypt, when David and his Captain Joab massacred all the males in Edom; that he there married the sister of Pharaoh; and that he returned to his own country on hearing of the death of David and Joab. When this occurred, Solomon, so far from being old, was about eighteen. The Septuagint (Vatican MS.) says that Hadad "reigned in the land of Edom." We may conclude then that on the return of this heir to the throne Edom declared its independence, nor is there any indication that Solomon tried to prevent this. Another contradiction of this writer is a note inserted about Rezon the Syrian,—“He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon.” Not, therefore, a Satan raised up by Jahveh against Solomon when in old age he had turned to other gods. Rezon “reigned over Syria,” and there is no indication of any expedition against him sent out by Solomon.

Bishop Colenso (*Pentateuch*, Vol. III., p. 101), in referring to these points, remarks that we do not read of a single warlike expedition undertaken by Solomon.\*

The remark (1 Kings xi.) about the Satans set against Solomon is more applicable to the Shiloh traitors, Ahijah and Jeroboam. Jeroboam,—a servant whom Solomon had raised to high office,—was instigated by Ahijah, a “prophet” neglected by Solomon, to his ungrateful treason. Ahijah pretended that he had a divine revelation that he (Jeroboam) was to succeed Solomon on account (of course!) of the king’s shrines to Istar, Chemosh, and Milcom. If the narrative were really historic nothing could be more “Satanic” than the lies and treacheries related of those self-seekers. Were the story true, the failure of these divinely appointed “Sataus” to overthrow the kingdom of Solomon, who did not arm against them, must have been due to his popularity. In after times this impunity of the glorious “idolator” would have to be explained; consequently we find Jahveh telling Solomon that, offended as he was by the shrines, he would spare him for his father’s sake, but would rend the kingdom, save one tribe, from his (Solomon’s) son. That this should be immediately followed by the raising up of “Satans” to harass Solomon and Israel, Jahveh having just said the trouble should be postponed till after the king’s death, suggests that the whole account of these quarrels (1 Kings xi. 14-40) is a late interpola-

\* The marriage of Hadad with Pharaoh’s sister and that of Solomon shortly after with Pharaoh’s daughter might naturally, Colenso says, lead to some amicable arrangement between these two young princes, representing respectively the ancient domains of Jacob and Esau, and the Bishop adds the pregnant suggestion: “Thus also would be explained another phenomenon in connexion with this matter, which we observe in the Jehovistic portions of Genesis—viz., the *reconciliation* of Esau and Jacob” (Gen. xxxiii). That Solomon was on good terms with Edom appears by the fact that his naval station was in that land (1 K. ix. 26).

tion. Up to that point the old record is unbroken. "He had peace on all sides round about him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon" (1 Kings iv. 24-25).

Jahveh, in his personal interview with Solomon (1 Kings xi. 11-13), said, "I will surely rend the kingdom from thee and will give it to thy servant." That is, as explained by the "prophet" Ahijah, to Jeroboam. As a retribution and check on idolatry the selection, besides violating Jahveh's promise to David (1 Chron. xxii), was not successful: after the sundering of Israel and Judah into internecine kingdoms, Jeroboam, King of Israel, established idolatry more actively than either Solomon or his son Rehoboam. On Jeroboam, his selected Nemesis, Jahveh inflicted his characteristic punishment of visiting the sins of the fathers on the children; as David was left the seduced wife whose husband he had murdered, while his son was executed; as Solomon was left in peaceful enjoyment of his kingdom and none of the sinful shrines destroyed, while his son bore the penalty; so now Jeroboam, elect of Jahveh, built golden calves, surpassed Solomon's offences, and vengeance was taken on his son Abijah, who died. This Abijah left a son, Baasha, who, undeterred by these fatalities, continued the "idolatries" with impunity for the twenty-four years of his reign, the punishment falling on his son Elah, who was slain after only two years' reign by his military servant, Zimri. And this Zimri, who thus carried on Jahveh's decree against idolatry, himself continued "in the ways of Jeroboam," the shrines and idols themselves being meanwhile un-

visited by any executioner or iconoclast until some centuries later.

In Josiah there arrived a king, of the line of David, who might seem by his fury against idolatry to be another "man after God's own heart." He pulverised the images and the shrines, he "sacrificed the priests on their own altars," he even dug up the bones of those who had ministered at such altars and burnt them. He trusted Jahveh absolutely. He went to the prophetess, Hulda, who told him that he should be "gathered to his grave in peace." He was slain miserably, by the King of Egypt, to whom the country then became subject.

Josephus ascribed the act of Josiah, in hurling himself against an army that was not attacking him, to fate. The fate was that Josiah, having exterminated the wizards and fortune-tellers, repaired to the only dangerous one among them, because she pretended to be a "prophetess," inspired by Jahveh. Her assurances led him to believe himself invulnerable, personally, and that in his life-time Jerusalem would not suffer the woes she predicted. Josiah, "of the house of David," seems to have thought that his zeal in destroying the shrines which his ancestor Solomon had introduced, mainly Egyptian, would be so grandly consummated if he could destroy a Pharaoh, that he insisted on a combat. Pharaoh-Necho sent an embassy to say that he was not his enemy, but on his way to fight the Assyrian: "God commanded me to hasten; forbear thou from opposing God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not." Here, however, was the fanatic's opportunity for an Armageddon: Pharaoh had appealed to what Solomon would have regarded as their common deity, but which to

Josiah meant a chance to pit Jahveh against the God of Egypt. On Jahveh's invisible forces he must have depended for victory. So perished Josiah, and with him the independence of his country.

Solomon, the Prince of Peace, had made the house of Pharaoh the ally of his country. Josiah carries his people back under Egyptian bondage. Solomon had built the metropolitan Temple, whose shrines, symbols, works of art, represented a catholicity to all races and religions,—peace on earth, good will to man. Josiah, panic-stricken about a holy book purporting to have been found in the Temple, concerning which the king by his counsellors consulted a female fortune-teller, makes a holocaust of all that Solomon had built up.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### SOLOMON IN THE HEXATEUCH.

"And when they brought out the money that was brought into the house of Jahveh, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of Jahveh given by Moses. And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of Jahveh." (2 Chron. xxxiv. 14, 15.) The Chronicler adds to the earlier account (2 Kings xxii. 8) the words "given by Moses," which looks as if the authenticity of the book (Deuteronomy) had not been without question. The finding of the Book is set forth in a sort of picture, wherein are grouped the priest, the theologian, the phantom prophet, the deity, the temple, and the contribution-box. Every part of the ecclesiastical machine is present.

One is irresistibly reminded of the finding of the Book of Mormon by Joseph Smith, although it would be unfair to ascribe Deuteronomist atrocities to the revelations of the American phantom, Mormon. Nor is this a mere coincidence. There are lists of the early Mormons which show a large proportion of them to have borne Old Testament names, derived from Puritan ancestors. When Solomon set up his philosophic throne at Harvard University, and the parishes of the Pilgrims became Unitarian, and Boston became artistic, literary, and worldly, the Jahvists began to migrate,

carrying with them their Sabbatarian Ark, in which so many frontier communities are imprisoned "unto this day." Some of them have become conquerors of Hawaiian "Canaanites," appropriating their lands. But the Vermont Hilckiah, Joseph Smith, discerned that a new Deuteronomy was needed to deal with the many American sects, and was guided by an Angel of the Lord to a spot in Ontario County, New York, where the Book was found (1827), which he was enabled to translate by the aid of his "Urim and Thummim" spectacles, found beside the Book. In the Book were discussed the principles of all the sects, though not by name, as in Deuteronomy Moses is made to deal with the conditions which had arisen since the time of Solomon. Unfortunately for these American Jahvists, they had left the New English brains behind, with Channing and Emerson, and had not carried with them enough to produce a western Jeremiah to save their movement from ridicule and popular hatred.

"Thy words were found and I did eat them," says Jeremiah (xv. 16). Whether, as some scholars think, Jeremiah had any part in the composition of the Book "found," or not, his rage attests the existence at the time of an important Solomonian School. "How say you, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Behold the lying pen of the scribes has turned it to a fiction." (viii. 8.) "They are grown strong in the land but not for the faith." (ix. 3.) "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might." (ix. 23.)

The Deuteronomist especially aims at suppression of the Solomonian cult and régime. The law, not found in Exodus, against marriage with foreigners (Deut.

vii. 3) is especially turned against Solomon's example by the addition that such a marriage will "turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods." The wife, or other member of a man's family, who entices him to serve other gods, is to be stoned to death. (xiii. 6-11.) Moses is represented as anticipating the setting up of kings, and even the particular events of Solomon's reign. Solomon's "forty thousand stalls of horses" (1 Kings iv. 26), his horses brought out of Egypt (1 Kings x. 28), his wives, his silver and gold, are all foreseen by the ancient lawgiver, who provides that: "He [your king] shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to the end that he should multiply horses . . . neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." (Deut. xvii. 16, 17.)

This Deuteronomist Moses foresaw, too, that some check on the divine appointments to the throne would be needed. "Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set over thee: thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee." As all of these commandments were received by Moses from Jahveh himself (Deut. vi. 1, and elsewhere), it is worthy of remark that there should be no trace of that anger with which Jahveh met the proposal for a monarchy: "they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them." (1 Sam. viii.) In 1776 Thomas Paine, in his *Common Sense*, used this scriptural denunciation of kings with much effect, and it no doubt contributed much to overthrow British monarchy in America.

The special denunciations of sun-worship in Deuter-

onomy (iv. 19, xvii. 3) suggest a probability that Solomon's allusion to the sun, when dedicating the temple, may have been popularly associated with the punishable practice alluded to in Job xxxi. 26, of kissing the hand to the sun and moon. The words of Solomon are cancelled in the Massoretic text, and do not appear in any English version, but they are preserved by the LXX., and there declared to be in the book of Jasher. "They are," says Dr. Briggs, "recognised by the best modern critics as belonging to the original text [of 1 Kings viii. 12, 13] which then would read :

"The sun is known in the heavens,  
 But Jahveh said that he would dwell in thick darkness.  
 I have built up a house of habitation for thee,  
 A place for thee to dwell in forever.  
 Lo, is it not written in the book of Jasher?"\*

This suppression of the opening line of the Dedication, at cost of a grand poetic antithesis, reveals the hand of mere bigoted ignorance. How many other fine things have been eliminated, how many reduced to commonplaces, we know not, but the additions and interpolations in the Old Testament have been nearly all traced. Many of these are novelettes more prurient than the tales forbidden in families when found in the pages of Boccaccio and Balzac, and it is a notable evidence of the mere fetish that the Bible has become to most sects, that a chorus of abuse instead of welcome still meets the scholars who prove the quasi-spurious character of the most odious stories in Genesis.

\* *The Bible, the Church, and the Reason*, p. 137, n. Dr. Briggs points out citations from the book of Jasher in Num. xxi., Jos. x., and 2 Sam. 1, where a dirge of David is given, and adds: "The book of Jasher containing poems of David and Solomon could not have been written before Solomon." The bearing of this on the age of the Hexateuch, in its present form, is obvious.

Bishop Colenso seems to have found in such tales only the work of a Jahvist with a taste for obscene details, but too little attention has been paid to the investigations of Bernstein, who discovers in many of these legends a late Ephraimic effort to blacken the character of the whole house and line of Judah.\* Bernstein does not deal with the story of Adonijah and Jedidiah (Solomon), whose relative antiquity is shown, I think, in the fact that no shameful action is ascribed to the elder brother to account for the deprivation of his primogenitive right. After Solomon's accession, however, Adonijah proposed to marry the maiden Abishag, who technically belonged to his father's harem, and probably this tradition gave a cue to the inventor of the story of Absalom's having gone to his father's concubines in order to base on the act a claim to the kingdom while his father was yet alive.

Absalom's shameful action is supposed to be a fulfilment of the sentence pronounced against David because of his crime against Uriah. A close examination of that passage (2 Sam. xii. 10-14) must suggest doubts about verses 11, 12, but at any rate the sentence is not fulfilled by Absalom's alleged act: David's "wives" were not taken away "before his eyes," and given "unto his neighbor," but some of his concubines were appropriated by his son. Absalom's act (2 Sam. xvi. 20-23) and that of David's consigning the concubines to perpetual isolation or imprisonment (2 Sam. xx. 3) are not alluded to in David's mourning for Absalom, nor in Joab's rebuke of this grief. In these strange incoherent items one seems to find the debris, so to say, of some

\* *Ursprung der Sagen von Abraham, Isaak, und Jakob.* Kritische Untersuchung von A. Bernstein. Berlin. 1871.

masterly work, picturing a sort of Nemesis pursuing David and his family for the crime against Uriah. Ahithophel, who is described as "the word of God," was the grandfather of Bathsheba and the chief friend and counsellor of David, yet it was he who suddenly becomes a traitor to the King, foreshadowing Judas—as his sinister name ("brother of lies") implies—even to the extent of hanging himself. It was Bathsheba's grandfather who moved Absalom to dishonor his father's concubines. But were they only concubines in the original story, or were they David's wives, as predicted in the verses 11, 12 (2 Sam. xii.) which seem misplaced and unfulfilled? It may have been that some of the details of the story were too gross for preservation, or too disgraceful to David, but I cannot think that we possess in its original form the tragedy suggested by the presence of an ancestor of seduced Bathsheba,—the sinister "word of God" Ahithophel,—and the death of the child of that adultery, the deflowering of Tamar, David's daughter, the disgrace and violent death of Amnon, Absalom, apparently of Daniel also, and finally of Adonijah. What became of the eight wives of David? Was that prediction ascribed to Nathan, of their defilement, without any corresponding narrative?

In a previous chapter I have pointed out the improbability that the fatal wrath of Solomon against Adonijah could have been excited by his brother's proposal of honorable wedlock with the maiden Abishag, and conjectured that there may have been a story, now lost, of rivalry between the brothers for this "very fair" damsel. Whatever may have been the real history there is little doubt that there was substituted for it some real

offence by Adonijah, perhaps such as that afterwards ascribed to Absalom. Bathsheba herself is here the Nemesis, as her grandfather is in the case of Absalom.

It must be borne in mind that we are dealing with the age which produced the thrilling story of Joseph and his brothers, and Potiphar's wife, and the contrast with his chastity represented in the profligacy of Judah. Indications have been left in Gen. xxxv. at the end of verse 22 of the suppression of a story of Reuben and Bilhah, and no doubt there were other suppressions. How very bad the story of Reuben was we may judge, as Bernstein points out, by the severity of his condemnation by Jacob (Gen. xlix.) and by the shocking things about Judah (Gen. xxxviii.) allowed to remain in the text. In the latter chapter Bernstein finds the same personages,—David, Bathsheba, Solomon,—acting in a similar drama to that presented in the Samuel fragments, and under their disguises may perhaps be discovered some of the details suppressed in the Davidic records. Bernstein says :

"In Genesis xxxviii. Judah, the fourth son of the patriarch, is shown in a light which is to lay bare the stain of his existence. Judah went to Adullam, where lived his friend 'Chirah.' He married a Canaanite, the daughter of Shuah.\* His eldest son was called Er. He (Er) was displeasing in the eyes of Jahveh, therefore Jahveh slew him. His second son was called Onan: he died in consequence of his sexual sins. The third son's name was Shelah, and, as it is mysteriously stated after his name, 'he was at Chezib when his mother bare him.' Chezib is certainly the name of a place, and the addition may therefore signify that the mother had

\*The marriage is doubtful: "He took her and went in to her" (Gen. xxxviii. 2.)

named the boy Shelah because the father happened to be in Chezib at the time, absent from home. Chezib has, however, a second meaning. . . . Chezib means 'deception, lie,' and is used by the prophet Micah in this sense (i. 4). Now as Shelah, in our narrative, serves to deceive Tamar's hopes, held out by Judah, the allusion to Chezib is appropriate. However this may be, Judah's sons are all represented as despicable. Even Judah himself fell into bad ways and was trapped into the snares laid by his daughter-in-law Tamar, who played the prostitute. Thus only did Judah found a generation, from which King David is said to descend, from a son of Judah called Paretz, meaning 'breaking through,' in which manner he is supposed to have behaved towards his brother at his birth.

"Veiled as the libel is here, it becomes apparent as soon as we cast a glance upon David's family. The picture which this libel draws of Judah hits David himself sharply. The 'Canaanite'—namely, whom Judah marries [?]  
—is no other than the wife of Uriah the Hittite (murdered at David's command) whom David himself married adulterously. This wife of Judah is said to have been the daughter of a man named Shuah. Therefore she is a Bath-shua, and is thus called (verse 12). But Bathshua is also Bathsheba herself, as one may conclude from 1 Chron. iii. 5. The eldest son died, hateful in the sight of God, just like the first son of Bathsheba (2 Sam. xii. 15). The son of Judah is alleged to have been called Er (עֵר); why? because reading it backwards (רַע, *wrong*) it means 'bad,' 'wicked.' The second son is called Onan (אֹנָן), and dies for sexual sins. He is no other than David's son Annon (אֲנֹן), who meets his death on account of his



sexual sins (2 Sam. xiii). The Tamar of Judah's story is the same as the Tamar dishonored by Amnon,—the daughter of David, who, in spite of her misfortune and her purity, is, to the entire ruin of her good name, humiliated to a person who plays the prostitute. And Shelah (שֵׁלָה) who does not die,—add to his name only the letter מ, and you have שְׁלֹמֹה, Solomon."

If in the light of these facts, which reveal the mythical character of some of the worst things told of Judah and David, the blessings of Jacob (Gen. xlix.) be carefully read, the blessing on Judah will be found rather equivocal. Colenso translates:

"A lion's whelp is Judah,  
Ravaging the young of the suckling ewes."

Is this couplet related to Nathan's parable of the rich man taking away the poor man's one little ewe lamb which smote the conscience of David?

"The staff shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor the rod from between his feet  
Until Shiloh come."

Is this merely a device of the Ephraimite rebels, Jero-boamites, pretending to find in a patriarchal prophecy a prediction that Judah is to be superseded by the descendants of Joseph (on whom Jacob's encomiums and blessings are unstinted)? Shiloh was always their headquarters.

It is probable, however, that there is here a play upon words. The words "Until Shiloh come" are rendered by some scholars "Till he (Judah) come to Shiloh," and interpreted as meaning "Till he come to rest." The Samaritan version ("*donec veniat Pacificus*") seems to identify Shiloh with Solomon. (Colenso,

Pent. iii. p. 127.) But this is transparently Shelah over again. Shelomoh (Solomon), Shelah, and Shiloh are substantially of the same etymological significance. It will be observed that in Gen. xxxviii. Shelah is the only person whose character is not blackened. The Ephraimic poem, the "Blessings of Jacob,"—each blessing a *vaticinium ex evento*,—could well afford a half-disguised compliment to Solomon who had made no attempt to suppress the rebels of Shiloh,—the city of Abijah, who originated the Jeroboamic revolution which divided the Davidic kingdom. Jacob's blessing on Joseph is of course a blessing on Ephraim: it closes with a transfer of the crown (from Judah) to "him that is a prince among his brethren." This is "rest" from the arrows of David, this is the coming of Shiloh; it occurred under the reign of the Prince of Peace, Solomon, and it could not be undone by Solomon's son Rehoboam.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SOLOMONIC ANTIJAHVISM.

The ferocities of Josiah and his Jahvists indicate the presence of an important Solomonist School. Their culture and tendencies are reflected, as we have seen, in the rage of prophets against them, and the continuance of their strength is shown in the preservation of Agur's Voltairian satire on Jahvism, and Job's avowed blasphemies:

"If indeed ye will glorify yourselves above me,  
And prove me guilty of blasphemy—  
Know then, that God hath wronged me!"

This translation from Job, quoted from Professor Dillon, need only be compared with that of the authorised and the revised versions to show us the *causa causans* to-day which of old added four hundred interpolations to the Book of Job to soften its criticism.

It appears strange, however, that Professor Dillon has not included among *The Sceptics of the Old Testament* three writers in the composite eighty-ninth Psalm, nor remarked its relation to the Book of Job. At the head of this wonderful composition the mythical wise man of 1 Kings iv. 31, Ethan, rises ("Maschil of Ethan the Ezrahite," perhaps meaning Wisdom of the Everlasting Helper) to attest the divine mercies and faithfulness in all generations. This is in two verses, evidently ancient, which a later hand, apparently, has

pointed with a specification of the covenant with David. After the "Selah" which ends these four verses come fourteen verses of sermonising upon them, in which nearly all of the points made by Job's "comforters" are put in a nutshell. The sons of God who presented themselves, Satan among them, in his council (Job i. 6) appear here also (Ps. lxxxix. 6):

"Who among the sons of the gods is like unto Jahveh,  
A God very terrible in the council of the holy ones."

After the mighty things that "Jah" had done to his enemies have been affirmed an Elohist takes up the burden and a "vision" like that of Eliphaz (Job iv. 13) is appealed to:

"Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy ones."

The vision's revelation (Job v. 17) "Happy is the man whom God correcteth" is also in this psalm (32, 33): "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes, but my mercy will I not utterly take from him." And Eliphaz's assurance "thy seed will be great" (v. 25) corresponds with that in our psalm (verse 36), "His seed shall endure forever."

When the psalmist of the vision has pictured, as if in dissolving views, the military renown of David, God's "servant," and his "horn," pointing to Solomon, God's "first-born," the transgressions of the latter are intimated (30-33), but the seer continues to utter the divine promises:

"My covenant will I not break,  
Nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips.  
One thing have I sworn by my holiness;  
I will not lie unto David:

His seed shall endure forever,  
 And his throne as the sun before me;  
 As the moon which is established forever:  
 Faithful is the witness in the sky. Selah."

Then breaks out the indignant accuser:

"But thou HAST cast off and rejected!  
 Thou hast been wroth with thine 'anointed';  
 Thou hast broken the covenant with thy 'servant,'  
 Thou hast profaned his crown to the very dust;  
 Thou hast broken down all his defences;  
 Thou hast brought his strongholds to ruin!  
 All the wayfarers that pass by despoil him;  
 He is become a reproach to his neighbors.  
 Thou hast exalted the right-hand of his adversaries,  
 Thou hast made all his enemies to rejoice.  
 Yea, thou turnest back the edge of his sword,  
 And hast not enabled him to stand in battle.  
 Thou hast made his brightness to cease,  
 And hurled his throne down to the ground.  
 The days of his youth thou hast shortened:  
 Thou hast covered him with shame! Selah."

A sarcastic "Selah," or "so it is!"—if Eben Ezra's definition of Selah be correct.

Then follow four verses by a more timid plaintiff, who, almost in the words of Job (e. g., x. 20), reminds Jahveh of the shortness of life, and the impossibility of any return from the grave, and asks how long he intends to wait before fulfilling his promises. He also supplies Koheleth with a text by the pessimistic exclamation, "For what vanity hast thou created all the children of men"!

After this writer has sounded his "Selah," another rather more bitterly reminds Jahveh, in three verses, that not only his chosen people are in disgrace, but his own enemies are triumphant.

(These two are much like the writer of Psalms xliv.

9-26, who almost repeats the points made by the above three remonstrants, and asks Jahveh, "Why sleepest thou?")

Finally a Jahvist doxology, fainter than any appended to the other four books, completes this strange eighty-ninth psalm:

"Praised be Jahveh for evermore!  
Amen, and Amen!"

Great is Diana of the Ephesians! Or is this the half-sardonic submission of Job under the whirlwind-answer, which extorted from him no tribute except a virtual admission that when the ethical debate became a question of which could wield the loudest whirlwinds, he surrendered!

In Job's case the only recantation is that of Jahveh himself, who admits (xlii. 7) that Job had all along spoken the right thing about him (Jahveh). The epilogue is a complete denial of Jahvist theology.

Job's small voice of scepticism which followed the whirlwind was never silenced. The fragment of Agur (Proverbs xxx. 1-4) appears to have been written as the alternative reply of Job to Jahveh. Job had said, "I am vile, I will lay my hand upon my mouth, I have uttered that I understand not." Agur adds ironically, "I am more stupid than other men, in me is no human understanding nor yet the wisdom to comprehend the science of sacred things." Then quoting Jahveh's boast about distributing the wind (Job xxxviii. 24), about his "sons shouting for joy" (*Ibid.* 7), and giving the sea its garment of cloud (*Ibid.* 9), Agur, the "Hebrew Voltaire," as Professor Dillon aptly styles him, asks:

"Who has ascended into heaven and come down again?  
 Who can gather the wind in his fists?  
 Who can bind the seas in a garment?  
 Who can grasp all the ends of the earth?  
 Such an one I would question about God: 'What is his name?  
 And what the name of his sons, if thou knowest?'"

The stupid Jahvist commentator who follows Agur (Proverbs xxx. 5-14) and in the same chapter interpolates 17 and 20, has the indirect value of rendering it probable that there were a great many "Agurites" (a "bad generation" he calls them) and that they were rather aristocratic and distrustful of the masses. This commentator, who cannot understand the Agur fragments, also shows us, side by side with the brilliant genius, lines revealing the mentally pauperised condition into which Jahvism must have fallen when such a writer was its champion.

It is tolerably certain that such fragments as those of Agur imply a literary atmosphere, a cultured philosophic constituency, and a long precedent evolution of rationalism. Such peaks are not solitary, but rise from mountain ranges. Professor Dillon, whose admirable volume merits study, finds Buddhistic influence in Agur's fragments.\* But I cannot find in them any trace of the recluse or of the mystic; he does not appear to be even an "agnostic," for when he says "I have worried myself about God and succeeded not," the vein is too satirical for a mind interested in theistic speculations. He is a man of the world,—more of a Goethe than a Voltaire; he regards Jahveh as a phantasm, is well domesticated in his planet, and does not moralise on the facts of nature in the Oriental any more than in

\* *The Sceptics of the Old Testament*, pp. 149, 175.

the Pharisaic way. He appears to be a true Solomonic philosopher and naturalist. I cannot agree to Professor Dillon's omission of the "Four Cunning Ones" (Proverbs xxx. 24-28), because they are not of the same metrical form as the others, and lead "nowhither." The lines

"The ants are a people not strong,  
Yet they provide their meat in the summer,"

no doubt led to the famous parable of Proverbs vi. 6-11, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard." Being there imbedded in an otherwise commonplace editorial chapter, they may have been derived from some commentator on Agur.

Agur apparently represents the Solomonic thinkers brought with the rest of the people under the trials that made Israel the Job of nations. They are such as those who led astonished Jeremiah to ask "what kind of wisdom is in them?" (Jeremiah viii.) They "do not recognise Jahveh's judgments"; in "shame, dismay, captivity, they have rejected Jahveh's word." The exquisite humor of Agur shows that these philosophers did not lose their serenity. Agur sees man passing his life between two insatiable daughters of the ghoul, "the Grave and the Womb,"—Birth and Death,—and amid the inevitable evils of life he will be wise to refrain from rage and lay his hand upon his lips.

But silence was just what the Jahvist omniscients could not attain to. Notwithstanding Jahveh's confession that Job was right in his position, and the orthodox wrong in their theory that all evil is providential, the "comforters" rise again in the commentator who begins (Proverbs xxx. 5):

"Every word of God is perfected.  
He is a shield to them that trust in Him,"



and proceeds in verse 14 with his inanities. And these have prevailed ever since. Even Jesus, when he took up the burden of Wisdom, and rebuked the Jahvist superstition that those on whom a tower fell were subjects of a judgment, must have his stupid corrector to add, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." This simpleton's superstition has taken the place of the great successor of Solomon, and to-day, amid all the learning of Christendom, is proclaiming that the Father is "permitting" all the Satans,—war, disease, earthquake, famine,—to harry his children just to test them or to chasten them. Why should omnipotence create a race requiring worse than inquisitorial tortures for its discipline? In all the literature of Christendom there is not one honest attempt to deal with the evils and agonies of nature; and at this moment we find theists apotheosizing the "Unknowable from which all things proceed," without any appreciation of the fact that in the remote past Jahvism sought the same refuge, and that it was proved by Job a refuge of fallacies. In an awakening moral and humane sentiment Job stands in this latter day upon the earth, and again steadily repeats his demand why one should respect an Unknowable from whom all things,—all horrors and agonies,—proceed.

Ethically we are required to do no evil that good may come; theologically, to worship a deity who is doing just that all the time. This is no doubt a convenient doctrine for the Christian nations that wish to preserve their own property and peace at home, while acting as banditti in remote continents and islands. All such atrocities are enacted and adopted as part of the providential plan of spreading the Gospel, latterly

“civilisation”; but it is very certain that there can be no such thing as national civilisation until evil is recognised as evil, good as good,—the one to be abhorred, the other loved,—and no deity respected whose government would wrong a worm.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE BOOK OF PROVERBS AND THE AVESTA.

The legend of the Queen of Sheba forms not only a poetic prologue to the epical tradition of Solomon's wisdom, but has a substantial connexion with the character of that wisdom, to whose final personification she contributed.

The corresponding Oriental stories do not necessarily deprive this legend of historic basis, but point to the region of this "Queen of the Seven (Sheba)." Those Oriental pilgrimages of eminent women to great sages, however invested with magnificence, are natural; even such romances could not have been invented unless in accordance with the genius of the country in which they were written. There is no antecedent improbability that a queen, belonging to a region in which her sex enjoyed large freedom, should have made a journey to meet Solomon.

The Abyssinians, who regard her as the founder of their dynasty, at the same time show how little characteristic of their country the legend was, by their ancient tradition, that it was the Queen of Sheba who provided that no woman should sit on the throne, forever! They claim that this Queen is referred to in Psalm xlv.—"At thy right hand doth stand the Queen, in gold of Ophir." This psalm is Solomonic, but the reference is no doubt to the Queen Mother, Bathsheba

(whose throne was on his "right hand," 1 Kings ii. 19). Neither Naamah the Ammonitess, mother of Solomon's successor, nor the daughter of Pharaoh, who was his especially distinguished wife, is described as a queen,—this indeed not being a Jewish title for a king's wife. The psalm indicates much glory to be conferred on a woman by wedlock with Solomon, but not that he was to derive any honor from either or all of the "three-score queens" assigned him in later times (Cant. vi. 8). In another Solomonic Psalm (lxxii.) it is said:

"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents:  
The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts,  
Yea, all kings shall fall down before him."

No glory is here supposed to be derivable from a woman, and an inventor would probably have merely devised a saga on the last of the lines just quoted, which is adapted in 1 Kings iv. 34, to Solomon's wisdom, or he would have imagined some instance of a particularly illustrious monarch coming to pay homage to Solomon. That the only example particularized is that of a woman carries some signs of reality.

Assuming that there was ever any King Solomon at all, this Psalm lxxii., whose Hebrew title is "Of Solomon," might have been written in the height of his reign. The title of "God" given him in Psalm xlv. is here approximated in the opening line, "Give the King thy judgments, O Elohim," and in the ascription to him of such virtues and such beneficent dominion, "from the river (Euphrates) to the ends of the earth," without any further reference to God, that an indignant Jahvist expands the doxology (18, 19) to include a reclamation for Jahveh. The ancient lyric closes with verse 17, which says of Solomon:

“His name shall endure forever;  
 His name shall have emanations as long as the sun;  
 Men shall bless themselves in him;  
 All nations shall call him The Happy.”

The Jahvist answers:

“Blessed be Jahveh Elohim, the Elohim of Israel,  
 Who alone doeth wondrous things,  
 And blessed be His glorious name forever;  
 And let the whole earth be filled with His glory.  
 Amen, and Amen.”

Now in this beautiful poem (omitting the doxology) the elation is especially concerning some connexion with Sheba. In verse 10 it is said “The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts”; in verse 15, “To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba.” These lines might have been written on the announcement of a royal visit, or meeting, which had not mentioned a queen. But what country is indicated by Sheba (the Seven)? In India there are seven holy rivers, and seven holy Rishis, represented by the seven stars of the Great Bear. But these correspond with the Seven Rivers of Persia which enter into the Persian Gulf, in the Avesta called Satavæsa, a star-deity. In the Yîr Yast 9 it is said:

“Satavæsa makes those waters flow down to the seven Karshvares of the earth, and when he has arrived down there he stands, beautiful, spreading ease and joy on the fertile countries, thinking in himself, ‘How shall the countries of the Aryas grow fertile?’ ”

As there are seven heavens, there are seven earths (Karshvares), and these, as already shown (*ante* II.), are presided over by the “seven infinite ones” (Amesha-Spentas). Of these seven the first is Ahura Mazda himself, and of the others only one is female—Armaiti, genius of the earth. Of this wonderful and beautiful

personification more must be said presently, but it may be said here that Armaiti was the spouse of Ahura Mazda, and Queen of the Seven,—the seven Ameshi-Spentas who preside respectively over the seven karshvares of the earth.

The function of Armaiti being to win men from nomadic life and warfare, to foster peace and tillage, she was a type of "the eternal feminine"; and such an ideal could hardly have been developed except in a region where women were held in great honour, nor could it fail to produce women worthy of honor. That such was the fact in Zoroastrian Persia is proved by many passages in the Avesta, wherein we find eminent women among the first disciples of Zoroaster. There is a litany to the Fravashis, or ever living and working spirits, of twenty-seven women, whose names are given in *Favardin Yast* (139-142). Among these was the Queen Hutaosa, converted by Zoroaster, the wife of King Vistâspa, the Constantine of Zoroastrianism. Hutaosa was naturally a visible and royal representative of Armaiti, "Queen of the Seven," a princess of peace, a patroness of culture, to be imitated by other Persian queens.

That the sanctity of "seven" was impressed on all usages of life in Persia is shown in the story of Esther. King Abasuerus feasts on the seventh day, has seven chamberlains, and consults the seven princes of Media and Persia ("wise men which knew the times"). When Esther finds favor of the King above all other maidens, as successor to deposed Vashti, she is at once given "the seven maidens, which were meet to be given her, out of the King's house; and he removed her and her maidens to the best place of the house of the

women." Esther was thus a Queen of the Seven,—of Sheba, in Hebrew,—and although this was some centuries after Solomon's time, there is every reason to suppose that the Zoroastrian social usages in Persia prevailed in Solomon's time. At any rate we find in the ancient Psalm lxxii., labeled "Of Solomon," Kings of Sheba (the Seven) mentioned along with the Euphrates, chief of the Seven Rivers (Zend Haptaheando); and remembering also the "sevens" of Esther, we may safely infer that a "Queen of Sheba" connoted a Persian or Median Queen.

We may also fairly infer, from the emphasis laid on "sevens" in Esther, in connexion with her wit and wisdom, that a Queen of the Seven had come to mean a wise woman, whether of Jewish or Persian origin, a woman instructed among the Magi, and enjoying the freedom allowed by them to women. There is no geographical difficulty in supposing that a Persian queen like Hutaosa, a devotee of Armaiti (Queen of the Seven, genius of Peace and Agriculture), might not have heard of Salem, the City of Peace, of its king whose title was the Peaceful (Solomon), and visited that city,—though of course the location of the meeting may have been only a later tradition.\*

The object of the Queen's visit to Solomon was "to test him with hard questions" as to his wisdom. It was not to discover or pay court to his wisdom, though he received from her "of the gold of Sheba" spoken of in the psalm. As a royal missionary of the Magi her ability and title to prove Solomon's knowledge, and de-

\* It may be mentioned that the Moslem name for the Queen of Sheba is Balkis, which points to the great Zoroastrian city of Balkh, near which are the Seven Rivers (Saba' Sin), whose confluence makes the Balkh (Oxus), with whose sands gold is mingled. (Cf. Psalm lxxii. 15.)

cide on it, are assumed in the narrative (1 Kings x.). Several sentences in her tribute to Solomon's "wisdom and goodness" recall passages in the Psalm (lxxii.). There is here an intimation of some prevailing belief that Solomon's wisdom was harmonious with the Zoroastrian wisdom. Whether the visit of the Queen be mythical or not, and even if both she and Solomon are regarded as mythical, the legend would none the less be an expression of a popular perception of elements not Jewish in Solomonic literature.

Of course only Biblical mythology is here referred to. The Moslem mythology of Solomon and the Queen (Balkis) has taken from the Avesta Wise King Yima's potent ring, and his power over demons, and other fables, in most instances to be noted only as an unconscious recognition of a certain general accent common to the narratives of the two great kings. Yet it can hardly be said that the stories of Yima in the Avesta and of Solomon in the Bible are entirely independent of each other,—as in Yima's being given by the deity a sort of choice and selecting the political career, Ahura Mazda saying: "Since thou wanted not to be the preacher and the bearer of my law, then make thou my worlds thrive, make my worlds increase: undertake thou to nourish, to rule, and to watch over my world." Ahura Mazda requests Yima to build an enclosure for the preservation of the seeds of life (men, animals, and plants) during a succession of fatal winters, and some of the particulars resemble both the legend of the ark and that of building the temple. Yima was, like Solomon, a priest-king (he is also called "the good shepherd"); he was, like Solomon, beset by satans (daêvas), and after a reign of fabulous pros-



perity he finally fell by uttering falsehood. What the falsehood was is told in the Bundahis: the good part of creation was ascribed to the evil creator.

Several other heroes of the Avesta have assisted in the idealisation of Solomon, notably King Vistâspa, already mentioned. Like Solomon, he is famous for his horses and his wealth. Zoroaster exhorts him, "All night long address the heavenly Wisdom; all night long call for the Wisdom that will keep thee awake." From Zoroaster the "Young King" learned "how the worlds were arranged"; and he is advised "have no bad priests or unfriendly priests."

It is now necessary to inquire whether there is anything corresponding to these facts in the ancient writings ascribed to Solomon. The lower criticism has little liking for Solomon, and makes but a feeble struggle for the genuineness of his canonical books against the higher criticism, which forbids us to assign any word to Solomon. But these higher critics acquired their learning while lower critics, and it is difficult to repress an occasional suspicion of the survival of an unconscious prejudice against the royal secularist, apparent in their unwillingness to admit any participation at all of Solomon in the wisdom books. Is this quite reasonable?

It is of course clear that Solomon cannot be described as the author of any book or compilation that we now possess. But neither did Boccacio write Shakespeare's "Cymbeline," nor Dryden's "Cymon and Iphigenia," nor the apologue of the Ring in Lessing's "Nathan the Wise," nor Tennyson's "Falcon," all of which, however, are his tales. I select Boccacio for the illustration because his defiance of "the moralities" led to his

suppression in most European homes, thus facilitating the utilization of his ideas by others who derive credit from his genius, this being precisely what might be expected in the case of the great secularist of Jerusalem. For no one can carefully study the Book of Proverbs without perceiving that a large number of them never could have been popular proverbs, but are terse little essays and fables, some of them highly artistic, which indicate the presence at some remote epoch of a man of genius. And I cannot conceive any fair reason for setting aside the tradition of many centuries which steadily united the name of Solomon with much of this kind of writing, or for believing that every sentence he ever uttered or wrote is lost.

It would require a separate work to pick out from the two Anthologies ascribed to Solomon (the First, Proverbs x. i-xxii. 16; the Second, xxv-xxix), the more elaborate thoughts, and piece together those that represent one mind, even were I competent for that work. But this fine task awaits some scholar, and, indeed, the whole Book of Proverbs needs a more thorough treatment in this direction than it has received.

Of the last seven chapters of the Book of Proverbs, one (xxx.), containing the fragments of Agur and his angry antagonist, has been (vii.) considered. Chapters xxv., xxvi., xxvii., and xxxi. 10-31, may with but little elimination fairly come under their general heading, "These are also proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah, King of Judah, copied out." Chapters xxviii. and xxix., with their flings at princes and wealth, contain many Jahvist insertions. The admirable verses in xxiv. 23-34, and those in xxxi. 10-29, 31,

represent the high secular ethics of the Solomonic school.

The verses last mentioned (exaltation of the virtuous woman) are, curiously enough, blended with "The words of King Lemuel, the oracle which his mother taught him." The ancient Rabbins identify Lemuel with Solomon, and relate that when, on the day of the dedication of the temple, he married Pharaoh's daughter, he drank too much at the wedding feast, and slept until the fourth hour of the next day, with the keys of the temple under his pillow. Whereupon his mother, Bathsheba, entered and reproved him with this oracle. Bathsheba's own amour with Solomon's father does not appear to have excited any rabbinical suspicion that the description of the virtuous wife with which the Book of Proverbs closes is hardly characteristic of the woman. She was the "Queen Mother," a part of the divine scheme, her conception of the builder of the temple immaculate, predetermined in the counsels of Jahveh.

The first nine verses of this last chapter in the Book of Proverbs certainly appear as if written at a later day, perhaps even so late as the third century before our era, and aimed at the Jahvist tradition of Solomon. Lemuel seems to be allegorical, and we here have an early instance of the mysterious disinclination to mention the great King's name. His name, Renan assures us, is hidden under "Koheleth," but he is not named in the text of that book or even in that of the "Wisdom of Solomon." In Ezra v. 11 the mention of the temple as the house "which a great king of Israel builded and finished" seems to indicate a purposed suppression of

Solomon's name, which continued (Jeremiah lii. 20 is barely an exception) until this silence was broken by Jesus Ben Sira, and again by Jesus of Nazareth.

The removal of verse 30 (Proverbs xxxi.), clearly a late Jahvist protest, leaves the praise of the virtuous woman with which the book closes without any suggestion of piety. Yet we find here that "her price is far above rubies," "she openeth her mouth with wisdom," and one or two other tropes which probably united with some in the First Anthology to evolve more distinctly the goddess Wisdom. Some sentences of the First Anthology grew like mustard seed. "Wisdom resteth in the heart of him who hath understanding" (Proverbs xiv. 33), reappears in 1 Kings iii. 12, and in x. 24 it is definitely stated that it was the wisdom which God had put into Solomon's heart that made all the earth seek his presence. It was a miracle they went to see; the glory is not that of Solomon, but that of God.\*

The nearest approach to a personification of Wisdom in the First Anthology is Proverb xx. 15: "There is gold and abundance of pearls, but the lips of knowledge are a (more) precious jewel." This expands in Job to a long list of precious things—gold, coral, topaz, pearls—all surpassed by Wisdom, and the similitudes journey on to the parables of Jesus, wherein the woman sweeps for the lost silver, and the man sells all he has for the pearl of price. This, however, was a compara-

\* In many places in the Avesta (e. g., *Sirôzah* i. 2) a distinction is drawn between "the heavenly wisdom made by Mazda, and the acquired wisdom through the ear made by Mazda." Darmesteter says: "Asnya khratu, the inborn intellect, intuition, contrasted with gaoshô-srûta khratu, the knowledge acquired by hearing and learning. There is between the two nearly the same relation as between the parâvidyâ and aparâvidyâ in Brahmanism, the former reaching Brahma *in se* (parâbrahma), the latter sabdabrahma, the word-ôrahma (Brahma as taught and revealed)." (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXIII., p. 4.)

tively simple and human development. And the first complete personification of Wisdom, growing out of "the lips of knowledge," and perhaps influenced by the portraiture of "the virtuous woman," is an expression of philosophical and poetic religion. This personification is in Proverbs viii. and ix., which are evidently far more ancient than the seven chapters preceding them, and no doubt constitute the original editorial Prologue to the so-called "Proverbs of Solomon," with the exception of some Jahvist cant about "the fear of Jahveh." We hear from "the lips of knowledge" a reaffirmation of the "excellent things" said in the Anthologies about the superiority of Wisdom to gems. (The word "ancient" given by the revisers in the margin to viii. 18 may possibly signify the antiquity of the Anthologies when this Prologue was written.) The scholarly writer of the Prologue had closely studied the ancient proverbs, and occasionally gives good hints for the interpretation of some that puzzle modern translators. Thus Wisdom, in describing herself as "sporting" (viii. 30), indicates the right meaning of x. 23 to be that while the fool finds his sport in mischief, the wise man finds his sport with wisdom. (This proverb may also have suggested the laughter of the "virtuous woman" in xxxi. 25.)

In viii. 22-31, Wisdom becomes more than a personification, and takes her place in cosmogony. This passage, which contains germs of much of our latter-day theology, must be quoted in full, and comparatively studied. Wisdom speaks:

22. Jahveh acquired me in the outset of his way,  
Before his works, from of old.
23. From eternity was I existent,  
From the first, before the earth.

24. When no deep seas I was brought forward,  
When no fountains abounding with water.
25. Before the mountains were fixed,  
Before the hills, was I brought forward :
26. When he had not fashioned the earth and the fields,  
And the consummate part of the dust of the world.
27. When he established the heavens, I was there ;  
When he set a boundary on the face of the deep ;
28. When he made firm the clouds above ;  
When the fountains of the deep became strong ;
29. When he gave to the sea its limit,  
That the waters should not pass over their coast ;  
When he marked out the foundation pillars of the earth :
30. Then was I near him, as a master builder :  
And I was his delight continually,  
Sporting before him at all times ;
31. Sporting in the habitable part of his earth,  
And my delight was with the sons of men.

Let us compare with this picture of Wisdom that of Armaïti, genius of the Earth, in the sacred Zoroastrian books. In the *Gâtha Ahunavaiti*, 7, it is said: "To succor this life (to increase it) Armaïti came with wealth, and good and true mind: she, the everlasting one, created the material world; but the soul, as to time, the first cause among created beings, was with thee" (Ahura Mazda). Thus, like Wisdom, Armaïti is everlasting: she was not created, but "acquired," by the deity. When Ahura Mazda, as chief of the seven Amesha-spentas, ideally designed the world, she gave it reality, as master-builder, and, like Wisdom, hewed out the foundation pillars he had marked out,—namely, the Seven Karshvares of the earth. The opening lines of Proverbs ix. read almost like a quotation from some *Gâtha* :

"Wisdom hath builded her house,  
She hath hewn out her seven pillars."

Like Wisdom, Armaiti was the continual delight of the supreme God. In an ancient Pâli MS., it is said that Zoroaster saw the supreme being in heaven, with Armaiti seated at his side, her hand caressing his neck, and said: "Thou, who art Ahura Mazda, turnest not thy eyes away from her, and she turns not away from thee." Ahura Mazda tells Zoroaster that she is "the house mistress of my heaven, and mother of the creatures."\* Like Wisdom, Armaiti has joy in the "habitable part" of the earth, and the "sons of men," from whom she receives especial delight ("the greatest joy"), are enumerated in the Vendidad, also the places in which she has such delight. They are the faithful who cultivate the earth morally and physically, and the places so watered or drained, and homes "with wife, children, and good herds within."

Armaiti has a daughter, "the good Ashi," whose function is to pass between earth and heaven and bring the heavenly wisdom (Vohu-Mano, "Good Thought") to mankind. The soul of the world thus reaches, and is reached by, heaven, and Armaiti thus becomes a personification of the combined human and superhuman Wisdom ascribed to great men, such as Solomon. At the same time the "sons of men" are all the children of Armaiti, and she finds delight among them. Even the rudest are restrained by her culture. "By the eyes of Armaiti the (demonic) ruffian was made powerless," says Zoroaster. The spirit of the Earth, laughing with her flowers and fruits, survived in Persia the sombre reign of Islam, to sing in the quatrain of Omar Khayyâm: "I asked my fair bride—the World—what was

\* *Sacred Books of the East*. Vol. XVIII. Pahlavi Texts tr. by West. The text quoted above (from p. 415) is of uncertain age, but it is harmonious with the more ancient scriptures, and no doubt compiled from them.

her dower : she answered, 'My dower is in the joy of thy heart.' "

"The sons of men" is not an Avestan phrase, for to Armaiti her daughters are as dear as her sons, but we find in the Vendidad "the seeds of men and women." These are sprung from those who were selected for preservation in the Vara, or enclosure, of the first man, Yimi, made by direction of the deity, when the evil powers brought fatal winters on the world. The deformed, diseased, wicked, were excluded; the chosen people were those formed of "the best of the earth." From long and prosperous life on earth, the Amesha of immortality, the good angel of death, conducted them to eternal happiness; they are the immortals, children of the demons being mortals. There was something corresponding to this in the Jewish idea of their being a chosen people, as distinguished from the Gentile world (see Deut. xxxii. 8), and no doubt the phrase "sons of men" represented a divine dignity afterwards expressed in the title, "Son of Man."\*

The Solomonic hymn of Wisdom at the creation (Proverbs viii. 22-31) contains other Avestan phrases. "From eternity was I existent," recalls Zervan akarana,

\* Among the cultured Jews, just before our era, there was a recognition of the equality of men, as is seen in the Wisdom of Solomon vii. 1, "I myself am a mortal man, like to all, and the offspring of him that was first made of the earth." Solomon ascribes his superiority only to the divine gift of wisdom. This idea of human equality was in the preaching of John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 9)—probably a Parsi heretic, at any rate an apostle of purifying water and fire—and it underlay the title of Jesus, "Son of Man." That in Armaiti there was a conception of a humanity not represented by race but by character and culture will appear by a comparison with the Vedic Aramati, a bride of Agni (Fire) to whom she is mythologically related, on the one hand, and on the other to the spirit of the earth who came to the assistance of Buddha. This story, related in many forms, is that when the evil Māra, having tempted Buddha in vain, brought his hosts to terrify him, all friends forsook him, and no angel came to help him, but the spirit of the earth, which he had watered, arose as a fair woman, who from her long hair wrung out the water Buddha had bestowed which became a flood and swept away the evil host. Watering the Earth is especially mentioned in the Avesta as that which makes her rejoice, and marks the holy man.



“boundless time,” and verse 26, relating to the earth, is still more significant: in it “the sun” has been suggested by the Revisers for (E. V.) “the highest part” (of the earth), but in either rendering it is near to the Avestan phrase, “the best of Armaïti” (Earth). This phrase is reproduced in the Bundahis (xv. 6), where the creator, Ahura Mazda, says to the first pair, “You are men (cf. Genesis v. 2, he ‘called their name Adam’), you are the ancestry of the world, and you are created the best of Armaïti (the Earth) by me.” (West’s translation. *Sacred Books of the East*. Vol. V., p. 54, n. 2.) The word for Earth in Proverb 26 is *adamah*, and in the Septuagint (various reading) it is actually translated *Αρμαιθ*, — Armaïti’s very name. We may thus find in Proverb 26 (viii.) the idea of Omar Khayyâm, “Man is the whole creation’s summary.”

Whether there is any connexion between the Sanskrit *Adima* and Hebrew Adam is still under philological discussion: probably not, for their meaning is different, *Adima* meaning “the first,” and Adam relating to the material out of which he is said to have been formed. Adam is derived from *Adamah*: after all, man came from the great Woman—“the Mother of all living.”\* *Adamah*, according to Sale, is a Persian word meaning “red earth,” and in Hebrew also it connotes redness. Armaïti might have acquired an epithet of ruddiness from her union with Âtar, the genius of Fire (Fargard xviii. 51, 52. Darmesteter. Introduction, iv. 30). In Hebrew *adamah* combines three senses—a fortress,

\* Even in the legend in Genesis ii. the “rib” is a misunderstanding. Eve (Chavah) was the female side of Adam, which was the name of both male and female (Gen. v. 2). The “rib” story arose no doubt from the supposition that Adam’s allusion to “bone of my bone” had something to do with it. But Adam’s phrase is an idiom meaning only “Thou art the same as I am.” (Max Müller’s *Science of Religion*, p. 47.)

redness, and cultivated ground. In Proverbs (viii. 31) we have the fortress or enclosure, "the habitable part of his earth"; in verse 26 the cultivated earth, "the highest part (or sum, or best) of the dust of the earth." The "delight" in which Wisdom dwelt (verse 30) is Eden, the garden of delight, and in verse 31 this delight associated with the human children of the earth. Here we have the elements of the narrative of the creation of Adam in Genesis, and of the garden, though clearly not derived from Genesis. And in Genesis we find something like a personification of the earth, as in ix. 13, "It (the rainbow) shall be a token of a covenant between me and the earth."

The idea of a creative deity requiring, as in Proverbs viii., the assistance of another personal being, is foreign to Jahvism, but it is of the very substance of Zoroastrianism, and it reappears in the Elohimism of Genesis. Another important and fundamental fact is, that we find in the prologue to Proverbs a deity contending against something, circumscribing forces that need control, not of his creation. It is plain that the conception of monotheistic omnipotence had not yet been formed. There are higher and lower parts of the earth.

Although there is no evidence that any such compilation as our "Genesis" existed at the time when the prologue (viii., ix.) to the "Proverbs of Solomon" was composed, the Elohimistic opening of Genesis, especially in its original form, harmonises with the Parsi conflict between Light and Darkness.

"When of old Elohim separated heaven and earth—when the earth was desolation and emptiness—darkness on the face

of the deep, and the spirit of Elohim brooding on the face of the waters,—Elohim said. Be Light; Light was.”\*

The spirit of God “brooding” over the waters (Genesis i. 1) may be identified with the Wisdom of Proverbs ix. 1, who “builds her house” as the Elohim built the universe, and “hath hewn out her seven pillars” like a true Armaiti, “Queen of the Seven.” She is the Spirit of Light. And perhaps the darkness that was on the face of the abyss suggested the antagonistic personification in the next chapter (ix.) named by Professor Cheyne “Dame Folly.” Wisdom, having builded her house, spread her table, mingled her wine, sends forth her maidens to invite the simple to forsake Folly, enjoy her feast, and “live.” Dame Folly,—who though she has “a seat in high places” is “silly,”—clamours to every wayfarer that even the bread and water of her table, being surreptitious, are sweeter than the luxuries and wine offered by Wisdom. This appears to be the meaning of Dame Folly’s somewhat obscure invitation.

“Waters stolen are sweet!  
Forbidden bread is pleasant!  
He knoweth not her phantoms are there,  
That her guests are in the underworld.”

\* These two, darkness and the brooding spirit, may seem to be related to the raven and the dove sent out of the ark by Noah, but this account only indicates the origin of the story of the Deluge; for the raven was in Persia an emblem of victory, and in the Biblical legend it was the only living creature that defied the Deluge and was able to do without the ark. In the corresponding legend in the Avesta, where King Yima makes an enclosure (Vara) for the shelter of the seeds of all living creatures, the heavenly bird Karshipta brings into that refuge the law of Ahura Mazda, and as the song of this bird was the voice of Ahura Mazda, it may have been an idealised dove

(“For lo, the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone . . . .  
The voice of the turtle is heard in the land.”)

But when Yima lent himself to the lies of the Evil One his (Yima’s) “glory” left him in the form of a raven (Zambâd Yast, 36). But both the raven and the dove were tribal ensigns, and it is not safe to build too much on what is said of them in Eastern and Oriental books.

In this contrast between Wisdom inviting all to enter her house, drink her wine, and "live," and Folly inviting them to her "Sheol," we have nearly a quatrain of Omar Khayyám: "Since from the beginning of life to its end there is for thee only this earth, at least live as one who is on it and not under it."

In the Avesta the good and wise Mother Earth (Armaïti) is opposed by a malign female "Drug" (demoness), whose paramours are described in Fargard xviii. (Vendîdâd). These two are fairly represented by Wisdom and Folly as personified in Proverbs viii. and ix.

The Jahvist who in Proverbs i. 1-7 (excepting the first six verses) undertakes to edit the original and ancient editor as well as Solomon, presents the curious case of one of Dame Folly's phantoms interpreting the words of Wisdom's guests. Unable to comprehend their portraiture of Dame Folly, he imagines that the allusion must be to harlotry, admonishes his "son" that "Jahveh giveth wisdom," which among other things will "deliver thee from the strange woman," whose "house sinketh down to the underworld and her paths unto phantoms." Which recalls the pious lady who on hearing her ritualistic pastor accused by a dissenter of leanings toward the Scarlet Woman, anxiously inquired of a friend whether she had ever heard any scandal connected with their vicar's name!

Our Jahvist editor seems to be one who would often say of laughter "it is mad"; and naturally could not imagine how Wisdom could "sport" before the Lord (viii. 30) unless she were in some sense mad. The sport before Jahveh could only be in mockery of some sinner's torment, like the derision ascribed to Jahveh

(Psalm ii. 4) ; consequently our editor represents Wisdom crying abroad in the streets :

“Because I have called and ye refused . . . .  
I also will laugh in the day of your calamity,  
I will mock when your fear cometh.”

But Pliny mentions the Mazdean belief, confirmed by Parsi tradition, that Zoroaster was born laughing. To him Ahura Mazda says: “Do thou proclaim, O pure Zoroaster, the vigor, the glory, the help and the joy that are in the Fravashis (souls) of the faithful.”

However, we may see in these first seven chapters of Proverbs that Wisdom had become detached from the sons of men, in whom she had once found delight, was no longer in the human heart, but had finally ascended to wield the heavenly thunderbolts. And yet it is probable that we owe to this vindictive and menacing attitude of deified Wisdom the preservation of so many witty and sceptical things in books traditionally ascribed to Solomon. The orthodox legend being that the Lord had put supernatural wisdom into Solomon's heart, and never revoked it despite his “idolatry” and secularism, it followed that the naughty man could not help continuing to be a medium of this divine person, Wisdom, and that it might be a dangerous thing to suppress any utterance of hers through Solomon,—unwitting blasphemy. However profane or worldly the writings might appear to the Jahvist mind, there was no knowing what occult inspiration there might be in them, and the only thing editors could venture was to sprinkle through them plenteous disinfectants in the way of “Fear-of-the-Lord” wisdom.

The proverbs in which the name *Jahveh* appears are not, of course, to be indiscriminately rejected as entirely

Jahvist interpolations. It seems probable that little more than the word Jahveh has been supplied in some of these,—e. g., xix. 3, xx. 27, xxi. 1, 3, xxviii. 5, xxix. 26. But in a majority of cases the proverbs containing the name Jahveh are ethically and radically inharmonious with the substance and spirit of the book as a whole, which is founded on the supremacy of human “merits” as fully as Zoroastrianism, in which salvation depends absolutely on Good Thought, Good Word, Good Deed. In dynamic monotheism (as distinguished from ethical) of which Jahvism is the ancient and Islam the modern type, the doctrine of human “merits” is inadmissible: a man’s virtues are not his own, and in Jahveh’s sight they are but “filthy rags,” except so far as they are given by Jahveh. But in the Solomonic proverbs the highest virtues, and the supreme blessings of the universe, are obtained by a man’s own wisdom, character, and deeds. And in some cases the claims for Jahveh appear to have been inserted as if in answer or retort to proverbs ignoring the participation of any deity in such high matters. I quote a few instances, in which the antithesis turns to antagonism:

Solomon—By kindness and truth iniquity is atoned for.

Jahvist—By the fear of Jahveh men turn away from evil.  
(xvi. 6.)

Solomon—He who is skilful in a matter findeth good.

Jahvist—Whoso trusteth in Jahveh, happy is he! (xvi. 20.)

In several other cases entire proverbs seem to be inserted for the correction of preceding ones,—these being not always understood by the interpolator:

Solomon—Treasures of evil profit not,

But virtue delivereth from death.

- Jahvist—Jahveh will not suffer the righteous man to be  
furnished,  
But the desires of the unrighteous he thrusteth  
away. (x. 2, 3.)
- Solomon—The tongue of the just is choice silver;  
The heart of the evil is little worth:  
The lips of the just feed many,  
But fools die through heartlessness.
- Jahvist—The blessing of Jahveh, that maketh rich,  
And work addeth nothing thereto. (x. 20-22.)
- Solomon—The virtuous man hath an everlasting foundation.  
(x. 25.)
- Jahvist—The fear of Jahveh prolongeth days. (x. 27.)
- Solomon—Hear counsel, receive correction,  
That thou mayst be wise in thy future.
- Jahvist—Many are the purposes in a man's heart,  
But the counsel of Jahveh, that shall stand. (xix.  
20-1.)
- Solomon—The acceptableness of a man is his kindness:  
Better *off* the poor than the treacherous man.
- Jahvist—The fear of Jahveh *addeth* to life;  
Whoso is filled *therewith* shall abide, he shall not  
be visited by evil. (xix. 22-3.)
- Solomon—The upright man considereth his way.
- Jahvist—Wisdom is nothing, heart nothing,  
Counsel nothing, against Jahveh. (xxi. 29, 30.)

In one instance the Jahvist has made a slip by which  
his hand is confessed. In xvii. 3 we find:

The fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold,  
But Jahveh trieth hearts.

But he omitted to notice the repetition in xxvii. 21,  
where we find the profound sentence which the Jahvist  
had reduced to commonplace:

The fining-pot for silver and the furnace for gold,  
And a man is *proved* by that which he praiseth.

The Jahvist spirit is also discoverable in xx. 22:

Solomon—Say not “I will retaliate evil”;

Jahvist—Wait for Jahveh and he will save thee.

Also in xxv. 21-2:

Solomon—If he that hateth thee be hungry, give him bread  
to eat,

If he be athirst give him water to drink.

Jahvist—For thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head,  
And Jahveh shall reward thee.

A similar mean and vindictive spirit is shown in xxiv. 18, following a magnanimous proverb; but in verse 29, probably more ancient than 18, we find the unqualified rebuke of retaliation:

Say not “As he hath done to me, so will I do to him,  
I will render to the man according to his work.”

It was this generosity that Buddha exercised,\* and Jesus; and it was left to Paul to recover the Jahvist modifications of Solomon’s wisdom in order to adulterate for hard Romans the humane spirit of Jesus (Romans xii. 19, 20). The Solomonic sentences are normally so magnanimous as to throw suspicion on any clause tainted with smallness or vulgarity. The pervading spirit is, “The benevolent heart shall be enriched, and he who watereth shall himself be watered.”

There is one proverb (xiv. 32) which suggests a belief in immortality, or possibly in the Angel of Death:

By his evil deeds the evil man is thrust downward,  
But the virtuous man hath confidence in his death.

According to the Avesta every man is born with an invisible noose around his neck. When a good man dies the noose falls, and he passes to a beautiful region where he is met by a maid, to whom he says, “Who art thou, who art the fairest I have ever seen?” She

\* See my *Sacred Anthology*, p. 210.



answers, "O thou of good thoughts, good words, good deeds, I am thy actions." The evil man meets a leprous hag, embodiment of his actions, who by his noose drags him down through the evil-thought hell, the evil-word hell, the evil-deed hell, to the region of "Endless Darkness" (Yast xxii.). This darkness may be metaphorically spoken of in Proverbs xx. 20:

He that curseth his father and mother,  
His lamp shall be put out in the blackest darkness.

But generally the allusions to death in the Solomonic proverbs do not seem to allude to physical death. In x. 2 "virtue delivereth from death" is in antithesis to the unprofitableness of evil treasures, and in 16:

The reward of a virtuous man is life;  
The gain of the wicked is sin.

Here "life" and "sin" are in opposition. Other sentences to be compared are:

The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life,  
To avoid the snares of death. (xiii. 14, cf. the Jahvist xiv. 27.)  
Understanding is a fountain of life to those who possess it,  
But the snare of fools is Folly. (xvi. 22.)  
He that hateth reproof shall die. (xv. 10.)  
The way of life is upward to the wise,  
So as to turn away from the grave (sheol) beneath. (xv. 24.)  
Death and life are in the power of the tongue,  
And they who love it shall eat its fruit. (xviii. 21.)

(In the last clause "it" probably refers to "life," unless the pronoun be cancelled altogether.)

The getting of treasures by a tongue of falsehood  
Is *getting* a fleeting vapour, delusions of death. (xxi. 6.)  
In the way of virtue is life,  
But the way of the by-path leadeth to death. (xii. 28.)  
The man who wandereth from the way of instruction  
Shall rest in the congregation of the phantoms. (xxi. 16.)

The two proverbs last quoted may be usefully compared with the ancient Prologue (viii. ix.) already referred to in this chapter, as they are there reproduced pictorially in Wisdom and Dame Folly sitting at their respective doors. Wisdom offers long life and happiness:

But he who wandereth from me doeth violence to his own life,  
All who hate me love death. (viii. 36.)

Dame Folly tries to turn into her by-path those who are "proceeding straight in their course" (ix. 15), but her victim—

He knoweth not her phantoms are there,  
That her guests are in the underworld. (ix. 18.)

The same Hebrew word *Rephaim* (phantoms or shades) is used here and in xxi. 16.

All of these references to death and the underworld (*sheol*), except perhaps xiv. 32, refer to the living death, moral and spiritual, which is of such vast and fundamental significance in Zoroastrian religion. In this religion the evil power is "all death." The universe is divided by and into "the living and the not living."\* "When these two Spirits came together they made first Life and Death,"—words sometimes used as synonymous with the "Good and the Evil Mind." Ahura Mazda representing all the forces that work for health and life, Angromainyu (Ahriman) all that work for disease and destruction, have ranged with them all animals and plants, on one side or the other, in this great conflict. The life of an Ahrimanian creature is "incarnate death." (Darmesteter's Introduction to the Ven-

\* *Gaya* and *ajyâiti*, translated by Haug "reality and unreality" (*Parsis*, p. 303). The translation "living and not living" was sent me by Prof. Max Müller in answer to a request for a careful rendering.

didād, v. 11.) His destructiveness is equally against virtue, wisdom, peace, health, happiness, life, and all of these, not merely physical dissolution, are included in his Avestan title, "The Fiend who is all death." He is the Abaddon of Revelation ix. 11, also he "that had the power of death" in Hebrews ii. 14, and probably came into both of these from Proverbs xxvii. 20:

Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied,  
And the eyes of man are never satisfied.

Dr. Inman (*Ancient Faiths*, i., p. 180) connects Abaddon with "Abadan (cuneiform), the lost one, the sun in winter, or darkness," which conforms with the Avestan Ahriman, who is emphatically a winter-demon, his hell being in the north (cf. Jeremiah i. 14 and elsewhere), and is the natural adversary of the Fire-worshipper.

Among the Zoroastrians there were not only Towers of Silence (Dakhma) for the literally dead, but also for the confinement of those tainted by carrying corpses, or by any contact with the death-fiend's empire, such as being struck with temporary death. "The unclean," says Darmesteter, "are confined in a particular place, apart from all clean persons and objects, the Armêst-gâh, which may be described, therefore, as the Dakhma for the living." Here then are the dead-alive guests of Dame Folly (Proverbs ix. 15), who opposes Wisdom, as Ahriman created Akem-Mano (evil thought) to oppose Volu-Mano (good thought), and here is the assembly that might give the Solomonic proverb its metaphor:

The man who wandereth from the way of instruction  
Shall rest in the congregation of the phantoms (or shades,  
*Rephaim*).

The Zoroastrian books from which I have been quoting contain passages of very unequal date, but it is the opinion of Avestan scholars that most of them are from very ancient sources, pre-Solomonic, and there is no chronological difficulty in supposing that such institutions as the *Armêst-gâh*, for the separation of the unclean, should not have been well known in ancient Jerusalem before the corresponding levitical laws concerning the unclean and the leprous existed.

The Book of Proverbs was also a growth, and although, as has been stated, there is reason to regard as later additions most of the proverbs containing the word *Jahveh*, as they are inconsistent with the general ethical tenor of the book, there are several in which that name is evidently out of place. Even in the editorial Prologue we can hardly recognize orthodox *Jahvism* in the conception of a being, Wisdom, not created by *Jahveh* yet giving him delight and some kind of assistance at the creation; and nowhere else in the Old Testament do we find such an idea as that of xx. 27, "The spirit of a man is *Jahveh's* lamp," or in xix. 17:

He who is kind to the poor lendeth to *Jahveh*,  
And his good deed shall be recompensed to him.

But in the Zoroastrian religion men and women render assistance and encouragement to the gods, and we find the chief deity, *Ahura Mazda*, saying to *Zoroaster* concerning the *Fravashis*, or souls, of holy men and women: "Do thou proclaim, O pure *Zoroaster*, the vigor and strength, the glory, the help and the joy, that are in the *Fravashis* of the faithful . . . do thou tell how they came to help me, how they bring assistance unto me. . . . Through their brightness and glory, O *Zoroaster*, I maintain that sky there above." *Favardin*

Yast, 1, 2.) As Frederick the Great said, "a king is the chief of subjects," so with Zoroaster Ahura Mazda is the chief of the faithful; or, as Luther said, "God is strong, but he likes to be helped."

The similitude in Proverbs xx. 27 is especially important in our inquiry :

The spirit of man is the lamp of Jahveh,  
Searching all the chambers of the body.

The word for "spirit" here is *Nishma*, which occurs in but one other instance in the Bible, namely, in Job xxvi. 4. Job asks :

To whom hast thou uttered words?  
And whose spirit came forth from thee?

This chapter of Job (xxvi.) is closely related to Proverbs viii. and ix., both in thought and phraseology : the Rephaim, or phantoms, the "pillars," the ordering of earth and clouds, the boundary on the deep; and there is an allusion to "the confines of Light and Darkness," which point to the domains of Wisdom and Dame Folly. Job and the proverbialist surely got these ideas from the same source, and also the word *nishma*, translated "spirit," which throughout the Old Testament is *ruach*, save in the two texts indicated. But there is no text in the Bible where *ruach*, spirit, or soul, is associated with light like the *nishma* of the proverb, and in Job *nishma* evidently means a superhuman spirit. Now there is a Chaldean word, *nisma*, which in the Persian Boundahis appears as *nismô*, and is translated by West, "living soul." The ordinary word for soul in the Parsî scriptures seems to be *rûbân*, and West regards the two words as meaning the same thing, the breath, or soul, basing this on the following passage

of the Bundahis, representing the separation of the first mortal into the first human pair, Mâshya and Mâshyoî :

“And the waists of both were brought close, and so connected together that it was not clear which is the male and which the female, and which is the one whose living soul (*nismô*) of Aûharmazd (God) is not away (lacking). As it is said thus: ‘Which is created before, the soul (*nismô*) or the body? And Aûharmazd said that the soul is created before, and the body after, for him who was created; it is given unto the body to produce activity, and the body is created only for activity; hence the conclusion is this, that the soul (*rûbân*) is created before and the body after. And both of them changed from the shape of a plant into the shape of man, and the breath (*nismô*) went spiritually into them, which is the soul (*rûbân*).”\*

With all deference to the learned translator, I cannot think his exegesis here quite satisfactory. In the first sentence *nismô* is the breath of God; and although in the second the same word is used for the human soul, the writer seems to have aimed in the last sentence at a distinction: the divine breath or spirit (*nismô*) creates a soul (*rûbân*), to receive which the plant is transformed into a body fitted for the “activity” of an imbreathed soul. West twice translates *nismô* “living soul,” but *rûbân* only “soul.” Does not this indicate Ahura Mazda as the source of divine life, as in Genesis ii. 7, where Jahveh-Elohim breathes into man, who becomes a “living soul,”—a being within the domain of the god of life, not subject to the god of death? Is it not his *rûbân* that is the image of *nismô*? (Cf. Genesis ix. 5, 6.)

Turning now to the Avesta, we find the famous Favaradin Yast, a collection of litanies and ascriptions to the Fravashis. “The Fravashi,” says Darmesteter, “is the

\* *Sacred Books of the East.* Vol. V., pp. 16, 53-54. Text and notes.

inner power in every being that maintains it and makes it grow and subsist. Originally the Fravashis were the same as the Pitris of the Hindus or the Manes of the Latins, that is to say, the everlasting and deified souls of the dead; but in course of time they gained a wider domain, and not only men, but gods and even physical objects, like the sky and the earth, had each a Fravashi." "The Fravashi was independent of the circumstances of life or death, an immortal part of the individual which existed before man and outlived him."

In Yast xxii. 39, 40, it is said: "O Maker, how do the souls of the dead, the Fravashis of the holy Ones, manifest themselves?" Ahura Mazda answered: "They manifest themselves from goodness of spirit and excellence of mind."

Favardin Yast, 9: "Through their brightness and glory, O Zarathrustra, I maintain the wide earth," etc. 12: "Had not the awful Fravashis of the faithful given help unto me, those animals and men of mine, of which there are such excellent kinds, would not subsist; strength would belong to the fiend."

In other verses these Fravashis (the word means "protectors") help the children unborn, nourish health, develop the wise. The imagery relating to them is largely related to the stars, of which many are guardians. These are probably the origin of the Solomonic similitude of reason, "The spirit (nishma) of man is the lamp of —?"

With all of these correspondences between the Solomonic proverbs, nothing is more remarkable than their originality, so far as any ancient scriptures are concerned. While they are totally different from the Psalms, in showing man as a citizen of the world, rely-

ing on himself and those around him for happiness, and exalting nothing above human virtue and intelligence, without any religious fervor or wrath, the proverbialist is equally far from the ethical superstitions of Zoroastrian religion, which abounds in fictitious "merits" and anathematises fictitious immoralities. It is as if some sublime Eastern pedlar and banker of ethical and poetic gems, who had come in contact with Oriental literatures, had separated from their liturgies and prophecies the nuggets of gold and the precious stones, polishing, resetting, and exciting others to do the like. At the same time many of the sentences are the expressions of an original mind, a man of letters, neither Eastern nor Oriental, and these may be labelled with the line of the Persian poet Faizi: "Take Faizi's *Dīwān* to bear witness to the wonderful speeches of a freethinker who belongs to a thousand sects."



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE SONG OF SONGS.

The praise of the virtuous woman, at the close of the Proverbs, is given a Jahvist turn by verse 30: "Favour is deceitful and beauty vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." But the Solomonists also had their ideas of the virtuous woman, and of beauty, these being beautifully expressed in a series of dramatic idylls entitled *The Song of Songs*. To this latter, in the original title, is added, "which is Solomon's"; and it confirms what has been said concerning the superstitious awe of everything proceeding from Solomon, and the dread of insulting the Holy Spirit of Wisdom supernaturally lodged in him, that we find in the Bible these passionate love songs. And indeed Solomon must have been superlatively wise to have written poems in which his greatness is slightly ridiculed. That of course would be by no means incredible in a man of genuine wisdom—on the contrary would be characteristic—if other conditions were met by the tradition of his authorship.

At the outset, however, we are confronted by the question whether the *Song of Songs* has any general coherency or dramatic character at all. Several modern critics of learning, among them Prof. Karl Budde and the late Edward Reuss, find the book a collection of unconnected lyrics, and Professor Cornill of Königs-

berg has added the great weight of his name to that opinion (*Einleitung in das Alte Testament*. 1891). Unfortunately Professor Cornill's treatment is brief, and not accompanied by a complete analysis of the book. He favors as a principle Reuss's division of Canticles into separate idylls, and thinks most readers import into this collection of songs an imaginary system and significance. This is certainly true of the "allegorical" purport, aim, and religious ideas ascribed to the book, but Professor Cornill's reference to Herder seems to leave the door open for further treatment of the Song of Songs from a purely literary standpoint. He praises Herder's discernment in describing the book as a string of pearls, but passes without criticism or denial Herder's further view that there are indications of editorial modifications of some of the lyrics. For what purpose? Herder also pointed out that various individualities and conditions are represented. This indeed appears undeniable: here are prince and shepherd, the tender mother, the cruel brothers, the rough watchman, the dancer, the bride and bridegroom. The *dramatis personæ* are certainly present: but is there any drama?

Admitting that there was no ancient Hebrew theatre, the question remains whether among the later Hellenic Jews the old songs were not arranged, and new ones added, in some kind of *Singspiel* or vaudeville. There seems to be a chorus. It is hardly consistent with the general artistic quality of the compilation that the lady should say "I am swarthy *but comely*," or "I am a lily of the valley" (a gorgeous flower). Surely the compliments are ejaculations of the chorus. And may we not ascribe to a chorus the questions, "Who

is this that cometh up out of the wilderness?" etc. (iii. 6-10.) "What is thy beloved more than another beloved"? (v. 9.) "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved"? (viii. 5).

As in the modern *vaudeville* songs are often introduced without any special relation to the play, so we find in Canticles some songs that might be transposed from one chapter to another without marring the work, but is this the case with all of them? The song in the first chapter, for instance, in which the damsel, brought by the King into his palace, tells the ladies of the home she left, and of maltreatment by her brothers, who took her from her own vineyard and made her work in theirs, where she was sunburnt,—this could not be placed effectively at the end of the book, nor the triumphant line, "My vineyard, which is mine own, is before me," be set at the beginning. This is but one of several instances that might be quoted. Even pearls may be strung with definite purpose, as in a rosary, and how perfectly set is the great rose,—the hymn to Love in the final chapter! Or to remember Professor Cornill's word *Scenenwechsel*, along with his affirmation that the love of human lovers is the burden of the "unrivalled" book, there are some sequences and contrasts which do convey an impression of dissolving views, and occasionally reveal a connexion between separate tableaux. For example the same words (which I conjecture to be those of a chorus) are used to introduce Solomon in pompous palanquin with grand escort, that are presently used to greet the united lovers.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness like pillars of smoke?" (iii. 6.)

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness  
Leaning on her beloved?" (viii. 5.)

These are five chapters apart, yet surely they may be supposed connected without *Hincininterpretation*. Any single contrast of this kind might be supposed a mere coincidence, but there are two others drawn between the swarthy maiden and the monarch. The tableau of Solomon in his splendor dissolves into another of his Queen Mother crowning him on the day of his espousal: that of Shulamith leaning on her beloved dissolves into another of *her* mother pledging her to her lover in espousals under an apple tree. And then we find (viii. 11, 12) Solomon's distant vineyards tended by many hirelings contrasted with Shulamith's own little vineyard tended by herself.

The theory that the book is a collection of bridal songs, and that the mention of Solomon is due to an eastern custom of designating the bridegroom and bride as Solomon and Queen Shulamith, during their honeymoon, does not seem consistent with the fact that in several allusions to Solomon his royal state is slighted, whereas only compliments would be paid to a bridegroom. Moreover the two—Shulamith and Solomon—are not as persons named together. It will, I think, appear as we proceed that the Shelomoh (Solomon) of Canticles represents a conventionalisation of the monarch, with some traits not found in any other book in the Bible. A verse near the close, presently considered, suggests that the bride and bridegroom are at that one point metaphorically pictured as a Solomon and Solomona, indicating one feature of the Wise Man's conventionalization.

Renan assigned Canticles the date B. C. 992-952, mainly because in it Tirza is coupled with Jerusalem. Tirza was a capital only during those years, and at

any later period was too insignificant a town to be spoken of as in the Song vi. 4:

“Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah,  
Comely as Jerusalem,  
Dazzling as bannered ranks.”

But the late Russell Martineau, a thorough and un-biassed scholar, points out in the work phrases from Greek authors of the third century B. C., and assigns a date not earlier than 247—222.\* But may it not be that the Alexandrian of the third century built on some earlier foundation, as Shakespeare adapted the “Pound of Flesh” and the “Three Caskets” (Merchant of Venice) from tales traceable as far back as early Buddhist literature? or as Marlowe and Goethe used the mediæval legend of Faustus?

The several songs can hardly be assigned to one and the same century. The coupling of Tirza and Jerusalem points to a remote past for that particular lyric, and is it credible that any Jew after Josiah’s time could have written the figleafless songs so minutely descriptive of Shulamith’s physical charms? Could any Jewish writer of the third century before our era have written iv. 1-7 or vii. 1-9, regarding no name or place as too sacred to be pressed into his hyperboles of rapture at every detail of the maiden’s form, and have done this in perfect innocency, without a blush? Or if such a poet could have existed in the later Jahvist times, would his songs have found their place in the Jewish canon? As it was the book was admitted only with a provision that no Jew under thirty years of age should read it. That it was included at all was due to the occult pious meanings read into it by rabbins, while it is tolerably

\* *American Journal of Philology*. Vol. III.

certain that the realistic flesh-painting would have been expunged but for sanctions of antiquity similar to those which now protect so many old classics from expurgation by the Vice Societies. These songs, sensuous without sensuality, with their Oriental accent, seem ancient enough to have been brought by Solomon from Ophir.

On the other hand a critical reader can hardly ascribe the whole book to the Solomonic period. The exquisite exaltation of Love, as a human passion (viii. 6, 7), brings us into the refined atmosphere amid which Eros was developed, and it is immediately followed by a song that hardly rises above doggerel (viii. 8, 9). This is an interruption of the poem that looks as if suggested by the line that follows it (first line of verse 10) and meant to be comic. It impresses me as a very late interpolation, and by a hand inferior to the Alexandrian artist who in style has so well matched the more ancient pieces in his literary mosaic. Herder finds the collection as a whole Solomonic, and makes the striking suggestion that its author at a more mature age would take the tone of Ecclesiasticus.

Considered simply as a literary production, the composition makes on my own mind the impression of a romance conveyed in idylls, each presenting a picturesque situation or a scene, the general theme and *motif* being that of the great Solomonic Psalm.

This psalm (xlv.), quoted and discussed in chapter III., brings before us a beautiful maiden brought from a distant region to the court, but not quite happy: she is entreated to forget her people and enjoy the dignities and luxuries offered by her lord, the King. This psalm is remarkable in its intimations of a freedom of

sentiment accorded to the ladies wooed by Solomon, and the same spirit pervades Canticles. Its chief refrain is that love must not be coerced or awakened until it please. This magnanimity might naturally connect the name of Solomon with old songs of love and courtship such as those utilised and multiplied in this book, whose composition might be naturally entitled "A Song (made) of Songs which are Solomon's."

The heroine, whose name is Shulamith,—(feminine of Shelomoh, Solomon)\*—is an only daughter, cherished by her apparently widowed mother but maltreated by her brothers. Incensed against her, they compel Shulamith to keep their vineyards to the neglect of her own. She becomes sunburnt, "swarthy," but is very "attractive," and is brought by Solomon to his palace, where she delights the ladies by her beauty and dances. In what I suppose to be one of the ancient Solomonic Songs embodied in the work it is said:

\* In 1 Chron. iii. 19 Shelomith is a descendant of Solomon. In these studies "Abishag the Shunamith," 1 Kings, i. 2, has been conjecturally connected with Psalm xlv., and the identity of her name with Shulamith has also been mentioned. This identity of the names was suggested by Gesenius and accepted by Fürst, Renan, and others. Abishag is thus also a sort of "Solomona." In 1 Kings i. there is some indication of a *lacuna* between verses 4 and 5. "And the damsel (Abishag) was very fair; and she cherished the King and ministered to him; but the King knew her not. Then"—what? why, all about Adonijah's effort to become king! David did not marry Abishag; she remained a maiden after his death and free to wed either of the brothers. The care with which this is certified was probably followed by some story either of her cleverness or of her relations with Solomon which gave her the name Shunamith—Shulamith—Solomona. Of the Shunamith it is said they found her far away and "brought her to the King," and in the beginning of the Song Shulamith says "The King hath brought me into his chambers." This suggests a probability of legends having arisen concerning Abishag, and concerning the lady entreated in Psalm xlv., which, had they been preserved, might perhaps account for the coincidence of names, as well as the parallelism of the situations at court of the lady of the psalm, of Abishag the Shunamith, and of Shulamith in the "song."

The "great woman" called Shunamith in 2 Kings 4 was probably so called because of her "wisdom" in discerning the prophet Elisha, and the reference to the town of Shunem (verse 8) inserted by a writer who misunderstood the meaning of Shunamith. This story is unknown to Josephus, though he tells the story of the widow's pot of oil immediately preceding, in the same chapter, and asserts that he has gone over the acts of Elisha "particularly," "as we have them set down in the sacred books." (*Antiquities*. Book ix. ch. 4.) The chapter (2 Kings iv.) is mainly a mere travesty of the stories told in 1 Kings xvii., transparently meant to certify that the miraculous power of Elijah had passed with his mantle to Elisha. There is no mention of Shunem in the original legend. (1 Kings xvii.)

“There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines,  
 And maidens without number:  
 Beyond compare is my dove, my unsoiled;  
 She is the only one of her mother,  
 The cherished one of her that bare her:  
 The daughters saw her and called her blessed,  
 Yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.”\*

Thus far the *motif* seems to be that of a Cinderella oppressed by brothers but exalted by the most magnificent of princes. But here the plot changes. The magnificence of Solomon cannot allure from her shepherd lover this “lily of the valley.” Her lover visits her in the palace, where her now relenting brothers (vi. 12) seem to appear (though this is doubtful) and witness her triumphs; and all are in raptures at her dancing and her amply displayed charms—all unless one (perhaps the lover) who, according to a doubtful interpretation, complains that they should gaze at her as at dancers in the camps (vi. 13).\*\*

Although Russell Martineau maintained, against most other commentators, that Solomon is only a part of the scene, and not among the *dramatis personæ*, the King certainly seems to be occasionally present, as in the following dialogue, where I give the probable, though of course conjectural, names. The dancer has approached the King while at table.

*Solomon*—

“I have compared thee, O my love,  
 To my steed in Pharaoh’s chariot.  
 Thy cheeks are comely with plaits of hair,  
 Thy neck with strings of jewels.

\* Compare Psalm xlv. 12-15.

\*\* 1. “Why will ye look upon Shulamith as upon the dance of Mahanaim?” The sense is obscure. Cf. Gen. xxxii. 2, where Jacob names a place Manhanaim, literally two armies or camps; but it was in honor of the angels that met him there, and it is possible that Shulamith is here compared to an angel. If the verse means any blush at the dancer’s display of her person it is the only trace of prudery in the book, and betrays the Alexandrian.



We will make thee plaits of gold  
With studs of silver."

*Shulamith, who, on leaving the King, meets her jealous lover—*

"While the King sat at his table  
My spikenard sent forth its odor.  
My beloved is unto me as a bag of myrrh  
That lieth between my breasts,  
My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna-flowers  
In the vineyards of En-gedi."

*Shepherd Lover—*

"Behold thou art fair, my love, behold thou art fair;  
Thine eyes are as doves,  
Behold thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant:  
Also our couch is green.  
The beams of our house are of cedar,  
And our rafters are of fir."

*Shulamith—*

"I am a (mere) crocus of the plain."

*Chorus, or perhaps the Lover—*

"A lily of the valleys."

*Shepherd Lover—*

"As a lily among thorns  
So is my love among the daughters."

*Shulamith—*

"As the apple tree among forest trees  
So is my beloved among the sons.  
I sat down under his shadow with great delight,  
And his fruit was sweet to my taste."

Thus we find the damsel anointing the king with her spikenard, but for her the precious fragrance is her shepherd. Against the plaits of gold and studs of silver offered in the palace (i. 2) her lover can only point to his cottage of cedar and fir, and a couch of grass. She is content to be only a flower of the plain and valley, not for the seraglio. Nevertheless she remains to dance in the palace; a sufficient time there is needed

by the poet to illustrate the impregnability of true love against all other splendors and attractions, even those of the Flower of Kings. He however puts no constraint on her, one song, thrice repeated, saying to the ladies of the harem—

“I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,  
By the (free) gazelles, by the hinds in the field,  
That ye stir not up, nor awaken love,  
Until it please.”

This refrain is repeated the second time just before a picture of Solomon's glory, shaded by a suggestion that all is not brightness even around this Prince of Peace. The ladies of the seraglio are summoned to look out and see the passing of the King in state, seated on his palanquin of purple and gold, but escorted by armed men “because of fear in the night.” In immediate contrast with that scene, we see Shulamith going off with her humble lover, now his bride, to his field and to her vineyard, and singing a beautiful song of love, strong as death, flame-tipped arrow of a god, unquenchable, unpurchaseable.

Though according to the revised version of vi. 12 her relatives are princely, and it may be they who invite her to return (vi. 13), she says, “I am my beloved's.” With him she will go into the field and lodge in the village (vii. 10, 11). She finds her own little garden and does not envy Solomon.

“Solomon hath a vineyard at Baalhamon;  
He hath let out the vineyard to keepers;  
Each for the fruit thereof was to bring a thousand pieces  
of silver:  
My vineyard, which is mine, is before me:  
Thou, O Solomon, shall have the thousand,  
And those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.”

There was, as we see in Koheleth, a prevailing tradition that Solomon felt the hollowness of his palatial life. "See life with a woman thou lovest." The wife is the fountain :

"Bethink thee of thy fountain  
In the days of thy youth."

This perhaps gave rise to a theory that the shepherd lover was Solomon himself in disguise, like the god Krishna among the cow-maidens. It does not appear probable that any thought of that kind was in the writer of this Song. Certainly there appears not to be any purpose of lowering Solomon personally in enthroning Love above him. There is no hint of any religious or moral objection to him, and indeed throughout the work Solomon appears in a favourable light personally,—he is beloved by the daughters of Jerusalem (v. 10)—though his royal estate is, as we have seen, shown in a light not altogether enviable. Threescore mighty men guard him: "every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear in the night," and the day of his heart's gladness was the day of his espousals (iii. 8, 11).

It is not improbable that there is an allusion to Solomon's magic seal in the first lines of the hymn to Love (viii. 6). The legend of the Ring must have been long in growing to the form in which it is found in the Talmud, where it is said that Solomon's "fear in the night" arose from his apprehension that the Devil might again get hold of his Ring, with which he (Aschmedai) once wrought much mischief. (*Gittin*. Vol. 68, col. 1, 2). The hymn strikes me as late Alexandrian :

"Wear me as a seal on thy breast  
As a seal-ring on thine arm:  
For love is strong as death,

Its passion unappeasable as the grave;  
 Its shafts are arrows of fire,  
 The lightnings of a god. [Jah.]  
 Many waters cannot quench love,  
 Deluges cannot overwhelm it.  
 Should a noble offer all the wealth of his house for love  
 It would be utterly spurned."

Excluding the interrupting verses 8 and 9, the hymn is followed by a song about Solomon's vineyard, preceded by two lines which appear to me to possess a significance overlooked by commentators. Shulamith (evidently) speaks:

"I was a wall, my breasts like its towers:  
 Thus have I been in his eyes as one finding peace.  
 Solomon hath a vineyard," etc. [as above.]

The word "peace" is *Shalôm*; it is immediately followed by *Shelomoh* (Solomon, "peaceful"); and *Shulamith* (also meaning "peaceful"), thus brings together the fortress of her lover's peace, her own breast, and the fortifications built by the peaceful King (who never attacked but was always prepared for defence). Here surely, at the close of Canticles, is a sort of tableau: *Shalôm*, *Shulamith*, *Shelomoh*: Peace, the prince of Peace, the queen of Peace. If this were the only lyric one would surely infer that these were the bride and bridegroom, under the benediction of Peace. It is not improbable that at this climax of the poem *Shulamith* means that in her lover she has found her Solomon, and he found in her his Solomona,—their reciprocal strongholds of *Shalôm* or Peace.

Of course my interpretations of the Song of Songs are largely conjectural, as all other interpretations necessarily are. The songs are there to be somehow explained, and it is of importance that every unbiassed

student of the book should state his conjectures, these being based on the contents of the book, and not on the dogmatic theories which have been projected into it. I have been compelled, under the necessary limitations of an essay like the present, to omit interesting details in the work, but have endeavoured to convey the impression left on my own mind by a totally unprejudiced study. The conviction has grown upon me with every step that, even at the lowest date ever assigned it, the work represents the earliest full expression of romantic love known in any language. It is so entirely free from fabulous, supernatural, or even pious incidents and accents, so human and realistic, that its having escaped the modern playwright can only be attributed to the superstitious encrustations by which its beauty has been concealed for many centuries.

This process of perversion was begun by Jewish Jahvists, but they have been far surpassed by our A. S. version, whose solemn nonsense at most of the chapter heads in the Bible here reached its climax. It is a remarkable illustration of the depths of fatuity to which clerical minds may be brought by prepossession, that the closing chapter of Canticles, with its beautiful exaltation of romantic love, could be headed: "*The love of the Church to Christ. The vehemency of Love. The calling of the Gentiles. The Church Prayeth for Christ's coming.*" The "Higher Criticism" is now turning the headings into comedy, but they have done—nay, are continuing—their very serious work of misdirection.

It has already been noted that the Jewish doctors exalted Bathsheba, adulteress as she was, into a blessed woman, probably because of the allusion to her in the

Song (iii. 2) as having crowned her royal Son, who had become mystical; and it can only be ascribed to Protestantism that, instead of the Queen-Mother Mary, the Church becomes Bathsheba's successor in our version: "*The Church glorieth in Christ.*" And of course the shepherd lover's feeding (his flock) among the lilies becomes "*Christ's care of the Church.*"

But for such fantasies the beautiful Song of Songs might indeed never have been preserved at all, yet is it a scandal that Bibles containing chapter-headings known by all educated Christians to be falsifications, should be circulated in every part of the world, and chiefly among ignorant and easily misled minds. These simple people, reading the anathemas pronounced in their Bibles on those who add anything to the book given them as the "Word of God" (Deuteronomy iv. 2, xii. 32, Proverbs xxx. 6, Revelation xxii. 18), cannot imagine that these chapter-headings are not in the original books, but forged. And what can be more brazenly fraudulent than the chapter-heading to one of these very passages (Revelation xxii. 18, 19), where nothing is said of the "Word of God," but over which is printed: "18. Nothing may be added to the word of God, nor taken therefrom." But even the learned cannot quite escape the effect of these perversions. How far they reach is illustrated in the fate of Mary Magdalen, a perfectly innocent woman according to the New Testament, yet by a single chapter-heading in Luke branded for all time as the "sinner" who anointed Jesus,—"Magdalen" being now in our dictionaries as a repentant prostitute. Yet there are hundreds of additions to the Bible more harmful than this,—additions which, whether honestly made or not originally, are

now notoriously fraudulent. It is especially necessary in the interest of the Solomonic and secular literature in the Bible that Truth shall be liberated from the malarious well—Jahvist and ecclesiastical—in which she has long been sunk by mistranslation, interpolation, and chapter-headings. The Christian churches are to be credited with having produced critics brave enough to expose most of these impositions, and it is now the manifest duty of all public teachers and literary leaders to uphold those scholars, to protest against the continuance of the propaganda of pious frauds, and to insist upon the supremacy of truth.

## CHAPTER X.

### KOHELETH (ECCLESIASTES).

In the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, 1897, a writer, in giving his personal reminiscences of Tennyson, relates an anecdote concerning the poet and the Rev. F. D. Maurice. Speaking of Ecclesiastes (Koheleth), Tennyson said it was the one book the admission of which into the canon he could not understand, it was so utterly pessimistic—of the earth, earthy. Maurice fired up. “Yes, if you leave out the last two verses. But the conclusion of the whole matter is, ‘Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.’ So long as you look only down upon earth, all is ‘vanity of vanities.’ But if you look up there is a God, the judge of good and evil.” Tennyson said he would think over the matter from that point of view.

This amusing incident must have caused a ripple of laughter in scholastic circles, now that the labors of Cheyne, Renan, Dillon, and others, have left little doubt that both of the verses cited by Maurice are later editorial additions. They alone, he admitted, could save the book, and the charm of the incident is that the verses were placed there by ancient Maurices to induce ancient Tennysons to “think over the matter from that point of view.” The result was that the



previously rejected book was admitted into the canon by precisely the same force which continued its work at Faringford, and continues it to this day. Only one must not suppose that Mr. Maurice was aware of the ungentleness of the verses. He was an honest gentleman, but so ingeniously mystical that had the two verses not been there he could readily have found others of equally transcendent and holy significance, without even resorting to other pious interpolations in the book.

Tennyson was curiously unconscious of his own pessimism. When any one questioned the belief in a future life in his presence his vehemence without argument betrayed his sub-conscious misgivings, while his indignation ran over all the conditional resentments of Job. I have heard that he said to Tyndall that if he knew there was no future life he would regard the creator of human beings as a demon, and shake his fist in His eternal face. This rage was based in a more profoundly pessimistic view of the present life than anything even in Ecclesiastes,—by which name may be happily distinguished the disordered, perverted, and mistranslated Koheleth.

It appears evident that the sentence which opens Koheleth,—in our Bibles “All is vanity, saith the Preacher; vanity of vanities, all is vanity,”—is as mere a Jahvist chapter-heading as that of our A. S. translators: “The Preacher showeth that all human courses are vain.” It is repeated as the second of the eight verses added at the end of the work. Koheleth does not label the whole of things vanity; in a majority of cases the things he calls vain are vain; and some things he finds not vanity,—youth, and wedded love, and work that is congenial.

Renan (*Histoire du Peuple d'Israël*, Tome 5, p. 158) has shown conclusively, as I think, that the signature on this book, QHLT, is a mere letter-play on the word "Solomon," and the eagerness with which the letters were turned into Koheleth (which really means Preacheress), and to make Solomon's inner spouse a preacher of the vanities of pleasure and the wisdom of fearing God, is thus naïvely indicated in the successive names of the book, "Koheleth" and "Ecclesiastes." We are thus warned by the title to pick our way carefully where the Jahvist and the Ecclesiastic have been before us; remembering especially that though piety may induce men to forge things, this is never done lightly. As people now do not commit forgery for a shilling, so neither did those who placed spurious sentences or phrases in nearly every chapter of the Bible do so for anything they did not consider vital to morality or to salvation. In Ecclesiastes we must be especially suspicious of the very serious religious points. Fortunately the style of the book renders it particularly subject to the critical and literary touchstone.

Is it necessary to point out to any man of literary instinct the interpolation bracketed in the following verses? "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart gladden thee in the flower of thy age, and walk in the paths of thy heart, and according to the vision of thine eyes [but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment], and banish discontent from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh; for youth and dawn are fleeting. Remember also thy fountain in the days of thy youth, or ever the evil days come or the years draw nigh in which thou shalt say I have no delight in them."

It is only by removing the bracketed clause that any consistency can be found in the lyric, which Professor Cheyne compares with the following song by the ancient Egyptian harper at the funeral feast of Neferhotap:

“Make a good day, O holy fathers!  
 Let odors and oils stand before thy nostril;  
 Wreaths and lotus are on the arms and bosom of thy sister  
 Dwelling in thy heart, sitting beside thee.  
 Let song and music be before thy face,  
 And leave behind thee all evil dirges!  
 Mind thee of joy, till cometh the day of pilgrimage,  
 When we draw near the land that loveth silence.”\*

There is no historical means of determining what writings of Solomon are preserved in the Bible and even in the apocryphal books. One may feel that Goethe recognised a brother spirit in that far epoch when he selected for his proverb:

“Apples of gold in chased work of silver,  
 A word smoothly spoken.”

Koheleth too appreciated this, and also (x. 12) uses almost literally Proverbs xii. 18, “The tongue of the wise is gentleness.” (Compare Shakespeare’s words, “Let gentleness my strong enforcement be.”) The lines previously cited, “Rejoice O young man, etc.,” are also probably quoted, as they are given in poetical quatrains. There are many of these quatrains introduced into the book, from the prose context of which they differ in style and sometimes in sense.

In none of these metrical quotations (as I believe them to be) is there any belief in God, the only instance

\* *Job and Solomon, or the Wisdom of the Old Testament.* By T. K. Cheyne. (1887.) Those who wish to study the Solomonic literature should read this excellent work. It is very probable, although Professor Cheyne does not suggest this, that a dramatic “Morality” from which Job was evolved, was imported by Solomon along with the gold of Ophir from some Oriental land.

in which the word "God" is mentioned being an ironical maxim about the danger coming from monarchs because of their oaths to their God, with whom they identify their own ways and wishes. Such seems to me the meaning of the lines (viii. 2, 4) which Dillon translates—

"The wise man harkens to the king's command,  
By reason of the oath to God.  
Mighty is the word of the monarch:  
Who dares ask him, 'What dost thou?'"

With this compare Proverbs xxi. 1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord (Jahveh) as the water-courses; he turneth it whithersoever he will." This proverb is evidently by a Jahvist, and Koheleth quotes another which signifies rather "Jahveh is in the king's caprice." But he adopts the neighbouring proverb, "To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to Jahveh than sacrifice." Koheleth says, and this is not quoted—"To draw near to (God) in order to learn, is better than the offering of sacrifices by fools."

Although the verses quoted by Maurice to Tennyson (xii. 13, 14) are not genuinely in Koheleth they correspond with sentences in the genuine text of very different import. Koheleth, though his quotations are godless, believes there is a God, and a formidable one. Sometimes he refers to him as Fate, sometimes as the unknowable, but as without moral quality. "To the just men that happeneth which should befall wrong-doers; and that happeneth for criminals which should be the lot of the upright" (viii. 14), and "neither (God's) love nor hatred doth a man foresee" (ix. 1). God has set prosperity and adversity side by side for the express

purpose of hiding Himself from human knowledge (vii. 14) ; not, alas, as the Yalkut Koheleth suggests, in order that one may help the other. God does benefit those who please him, and punish those who displease him; this is 'good' and 'evil' *to Him*; but it has no relation with the humanly good and evil (viii. 11-14). As it is evident that God's favor is not secured by good works nor his disfavor incurred by evil works, a prudent man will consider that it may perhaps be a matter of etiquette, and will be punctilious, especially "in the house of God"; he will not speak rashly and then hope to escape by saying "it was rashness." His words had better be few, and if he makes any vow (which may well be avoided) he should perform it. But as for practical life and conduct, God, or fate, is clearly indifferent to it, consequently let a man eat his bread and quaff his wine with joy, love his wife,—the best portion of his lot,—and whatever his hand findeth to do that do with vigor, remembering that "there is no work, nor thought, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the inevitable grave."

Such is Koheleth's conception of life, which, except so far as it is marred by a vague notion of Fate which is fatal to philanthropy, is not very different from the idea growing in our own time. "The All is a never-ceasing whirl" (i. 8), and Koheleth advises that each individual man try to make what little circle of happiness he can around him. "O my heart!" says Omar Khayyám, "thou wilt never penetrate the mysteries of the heavens; thou wilt never reach that culminating point of wisdom which the intrepid omniscients have attained. Resign thyself then to make what little para-

dise thou canst here below. As for that close-barred seraglio beyond thou shalt arrive there—or thou shalt not!”

It is, however, impossible for any church or priesthood to be maintained on any such principles. Where mankind believe with Koheleth that whatever God does is forever, that nothing can be superadded to it nor aught be taken away; and that God has so contrived that man must fear Him; they will have no use for any paraphernalia for softening the irrevocable decrees of a Judgment Day already past. But Koheleth's arrows, feathered with wit and eloquence, were logically shot from the Jahvist arquebus. It was Jahveh himself who proudly claimed that he created good and evil, and that if there were evil in a city it was his work. It was Jahveh's own prophet, Isaiah, who cried (Ixiii. 17), “O Lord, why dost Thou make us to err from Thy ways, and hardenest our heart from Thy fear?”

What then could Jahvism say when a time arrived wherein it must defend itself against a Jahveh-created world?

## CHAPTER XI.

### WISDOM ( ECCLESIASTICUS ).

It was necessary that Koheleth should be answered, but who was competent for this? A fable had been invented of a Solomonic serpent who had tempted Eve to taste the fruit of knowledge which, when the man shared it, brought a curse on the earth, but the canonical prophets do not appear to have heard of it, and at any rate it was too late in the day to meet fact with fable. Nor had Jahveh's whirlwind-answer to Job proved effectual. However, some sort of answer did come, and significantly enough it had to come from Koheleth's own quarter, the Wisdom school. Pure Jahvism had not brains enough for the task.

The apocryphal book "Ecclesiasticus" is the antidote to Ecclesiastes. (These are the Christian names given to the two books.) This book, bearing the simple title "Wisdom," compiled and partly written by Jesus Ben Sira early in the second century B. C., is as a whole much more than an offset to Koheleth. It is a great though unintentional literary monument to Solomon, and it is the book of reconciliation, or so intended, between Solomonism and Jahvism,—or, as we should now say, between philosophy and theology.

The newly discovered original Hebrew of Ecclesiasticus xxxix. 15, xlix. 11, published by the Clarendon Press in 1897, enables us to read correctly for the

first time the portraiture of Solomon in xlvi., with the assistance of Wace and other scholars :

12. After him [David] rose up a wise son, and for his [David's] sake he dwelt in quiet.

13. Solomon reigned in days of prosperity, and was honoured, and God gave rest to him round about that he might build an house in his name, and prepare his sanctuary for ever.

14. How wast thou wise in thy youth, and didst overflow with instruction like the Nile!

15. The earth (was covered by thy soul) and thou didst celebrate song in the height.

16. Thy name went far unto the islands, and for thy peace thou wast beloved.

17. The countries marvelled at thee for thy songs, and proverbs, and parables, and interpretations.

18. Thou wast called by the glorious name which is called over Israel.

18a. Thou didst gather gold as tin, and didst gather silver as lead.

19. But thou gavest thy loins unto women, and lettest them have dominion over thy body.

20. Thou didst stain thy honour and pollute thy seed; so that thou broughtest wrath upon thy children, that they should groan in their beds.

21. That the kingdom should be divided: and out of Ephraim ruled a rebel kingdom.

22. But the Lord will never leave off his mercy, neither shall any of his words perish, neither will he abolish the posterity of his elect, and the seed of him that loveth him he will not take away: wherefore he gave a remnant unto Jacob, and out of him a root unto David.

23. Thus rested Solomon with his fathers, and of his seed he left behind him Rehoboam [of the lineage of Ammon], ample in foolishness and lacking understanding, who by his council let loose the people.

In the last sentence I have inserted in crochets an alternative reading of Fritzsche for the three words



that follow. (Rehoboam's Ammonite mother was Naamah.)

It will be noticed that early in the second century B. C. there remained no trace of the anathemas on Solomon for his foreign or his idolatrous wives. He is now simply accused of being too fond of women,—a charge not known to the canonical books.

The verse 18 attests the correctness of the view taken of the forty-fifth Psalm in chapter III., written before this Clarendon Press volume appeared. It thus becomes certain that the Psalm was recognised as written in Solomon's time, and that it was he who was there addressed as "God" ("the glorious name").

The mention of this fact in "Wisdom," and the enthusiasm pervading every sentence of the tribute to Solomon, despite his alleged sensuality, supply conclusive evidence that the cult of Solomon had for more than eight centuries been continuous, that it was at length prevailing, and that it had become necessary for a broad wing of Jahvism to include the Solomonic worldly wisdom and ethics.

Jesus Ben Sira states that he found a book written by his learned grandfather, whose name was also Jesus, who had studied many works of "our fathers," and added to them writings of his own. The anonymous preface states that Sira, son of the first Jesus, left it to his son, and that "this Jesus did imitate Solomon."

It is not said that Sira contributed anything to this composite work, yet there appear to be three minds in it. There is a fine and free philosophy which savors of the earliest traditions of the Solomonic School; there is an exceptionally morose Jahvism; and there is also

mysticism, an attempt to rationalise and soften the Jahvism, and to solemnise the philosophy, so as to blend them in a kind of harmonious religion. I cannot help feeling that Sira or some friend of his must have inserted the Jahvism between the grandfather and the grandson.

However this may be, it is evident that Jesus Ben Sira was too reverent to seriously alter anything in the volume before him, for the contrast is startling between the hard Jahvism and the philosophy of life. Their inclusion in one work is like the union of oil and vinegar. The Jahvism is curiously bald: fear Jahveh, keep his commandments, pay your tithes, say your prayers, be severe with your children (especially daughters), never play with them, guard your wife vigilantly, flog your servants. The philosophy is quite incongruous with this formalism and rigidity, most of the maxims being elaborated with care, and only proverbs in form. Some of them are almost Shakespearian in artistic expression:

“Pipe and harp make sweet the song, but a sincere tongue is above them both.”

“Wisdom hid, and treasure hoarded, what value is in either?”

“The fool’s heart is in his mouth, the wise man’s mouth is in his heart.”

“There is no riches above a sound body, and no joy above that of the heart.”

“Whoso regardeth dreams is as one who grasps at his shadow.”

“The evil man cursing Satan is but cursing himself.”

“The bars of Wisdom shall be thy fortress, her chains thy robe of honour.”

About the rendering of xli. 15 there is some doubt, and I give this conjecture:

Better the (ignorant) that hideth his folly, than the (learned) who hideth his wisdom.

In the Bible which belonged to the historian Gibbon, loaned by the late General Meredith Read to the Gibbon exhibition in London, I observed a pencil mark around these sentences in "Wisdom":

"He that buildeth his house with other men's money, is like one that gathereth stones for the tomb of his own burial."

"He that is not wise will not be taught, but there is a wisdom that multiplieth bitterness."

To Jesus Ben Sira we may, I believe, ascribe the following:

"Glorifying God, exalt him as far as your thought can reach, yet you will never attain to his height: praising him, put forth all your powers, be not weary, yet ever will they fall short. Who hath seen him that he can tell us? Who can describe him as he is? Let us still be rejoicing in him, for we shall not search him out: he is great beyond his works."

This has an interesting correspondence with the beautiful rapture of the Persian Sâdi:

"They who pretend to be informed are ignorant, for they who have known him have not recovered their senses. O thou who towerest above the heights of imagination, thought, or conjecture, surpassing all that has been related, and excelling all that we have heard or read, the banquet is ended, the congregation is dismissed, and life draws to a close, and we still rest in our first encomium of thee!"

To Jesus Ben Sira may be safely ascribed the passages that bear witness to the pressure of problems which, though old, appear in new forms under Hellenic influences. They grow urgent and threaten the foundations of Jahvism. It was no longer sufficient to say that Jahveh rewarded virtue and piety, and punished vice and impiety in this world. Job had demanded the

evidence for this, and the centuries had brought none. Job was awarded some recompense in this world, but that happy experience did not attend other virtuous sufferers.

The doctrine of one writer in "Wisdom" is simply predestination. Paul's potter-and-clay similitude is anticipated, and the Parsi dualism curiously adapted to Jahvist monotheism: "Good is set against evil, life against death, the godly against the sinner and the sinner against the godly: look through all the works of the Most High and there are two and two, one against another." But the liberal son of Sira is more optimist: "All things are double, one against another, but he hath made nothing imperfect: one thing establisheth the good of another." Freedom of the will is asserted: "Say not, he hath caused me to err, for he hath no need of the evildoer. He made man from the beginning and left him in the hand of his (own) counsel. . . . He hath set fire and water before thee, stretch forth thy hand to whichever thou wilt. Before man is the living and the not-living, and whichever he liketh shall be given him."

But the doctrine of human free agency is pregnant with polemics; it has so been in Christian history, as is proved by the Pelagian, Arminian, Jesuit, and Wesleyan movements. There are indications in Ben Sira's work that the foundations of Jahvism were threatened by a moral scepticism. His own celebration of the Fathers was enough to bring into dreary contrast the tragedies of his own time and glories of the Past, when "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon." What shelter now in the divine

fig-tree, which could bear nothing but legendary or predictive leaves? The curse on the barren tree was near at hand when Jesus Ben Sira uttered his pathetic complaint, veiled in prayer :

“Have mercy on us, O Lord God of all, and regard us! Send thy fear on all the nations that seek thee not; lift thy hand against them, let them see thy power! As thou wast (of old) sanctified in us before them, be thou (now) magnified among them before us; and let them know thee, as we have known thee,—that there is, O God, no God but thou alone! Show new signs, more strange wonders; glorify thy hand and thy right arm, that they may publish thy wondrous works! Raise up indignation, pour out wrath, remove the adversary, destroy the enemy: hasten! remember thy covenant, and let them witness thy wonderful works!”

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

Somewhat more than a century after Jesus Ben Sira's work, came an answer to his prayer, not from above but from beneath, in the so-called "Psalter of Solomon." This is no wisdom book, and need not detain us. It is mainly a hash—one may say a mess—made up out of the Psalms; and though some of the allusions, apparently to Pompey and others, may possess value in other connexions, the work need only be mentioned here as an indication of the fate which Solomon met at the hands of Jahvism. The name of the Wisest of his race on this vulgar production is like the doggerel on Shakespeare's tomb, and the fling at England's greatest poet written on the tomb of his daughter,—“Wise to salvation was good Mistriss Hall,” etc.

Before passing, it may be remarked that the obvious allusions to Christ in this Psalter seem clearly spurious, and for one I cannot regard as other than a late interpolation verse 24 of Psalter-Psalm xvii.: “Behold, O God, and raise up unto them their king, the Son of David, in the time which thou, O God, knowest, that he may reign over Israel thy servant.” There is nothing in the literature of the time before or after that would warrant the concession to this ranting salvationist (B. C. 70-60) of an idea which would then have been original. The verse has the accent of a Second Ad-

ventist a century later. The title "Son of David" occurs even in the New Testament but sixteen times.

The Psalter is in spirit thoroughly Jahvist, narrow, hard, without one ray of Solomonic wisdom or wit. It may fairly be regarded as the sepulchre of the wise man whose name it bears (though not in its text). Jahvism has here triumphed over the whole cult of Wisdom.

But Solomon is not to rest there. He is again evoked, though not yet in his ancient secular greatness, by the next work that claims our attention.

This last of the Wisdom Books bears the heading "Wisdom of Solomon" (*Sophia Solomontos*) and gives unmistakable identifications of the King, though herein also the name "Solomon" appears only in the title. Perhaps the writer may have wished to avoid exciting the ridicule or resentment of the Solomonists by plainly connecting the name of their founder with a retraction of all the secularism and the heresies anciently associated with him. The aristocratic Sadducees, who believed not in immortality, derived their name from Solomon's famous chaplain, Zadok.

This "Wisdom of Solomon" probably appeared not far from the first year of our era. It is written in almost classical Greek, is full of striking and poetic interpretations and spiritualisations of Jewish legends, and transfused with a piety at once warm and mystical. Solomon is summoned much in the way that the "Wandering Jew," Ahasuerus, is called up in Shelley's "Prometheus," yet not quite allegorically, to testify concerning the Past, and concerning the mysteries of the invisible world. He has left behind his secularist Proverbs and his worldly wisdom; but though he now rises as a prophet of otherworldliness, not a word is uttered

inconsistent with his having been a saint from the beginning, albeit "chastised" and "proved." In fact he gives his spiritual autobiography, which is that of a Son of God wise and "undefiled" from childhood. His burden is to warn the kings and judges of the world of the blessedness that awaits the righteous,—the misery that awaits the unrighteous,—beyond the grave.

The work impresses me as having been written by one who had long been an enthusiastic Solomonist, but who had been spiritually revolutionised by attaining the new belief of immortality. It does not appear as if the apparition of Solomon was to this writer a simple imagination. Solomon seems to be alive, or rather as if never dead. "For thou (God) hast power of life and death: thou leadest to the gates of Hades, and bringest up again." "The giving heed unto her (Wisdom's) laws is the assurance of incorruption; and incorruption maketh us near unto God: therefore the desire of Wisdom bringeth to a Kingdom."

The Jewish people idealised Solomon's reign long before they idealised the man himself; and indeed he had to reach his halo under personified epithets derived from his fame,—as "Melchizedek," and "Prince of Peace." The nation sighed for the restoration of his splendid empire, but could not describe their Coming Man as a returning Solomon, because the priests and prophets,—a gentry little respected by the Wise Man,—steadily ascribed all the national misfortunes to the shrines built to other deities than Jahveh by the royal Citizen of the World. Thus grew such prophetic indications as "the House of David," "Jesse's branch," and finally "Son of David."

But this idea of the returning hero does not appear



to have been original with any Semitic people; it is first found among them in the Oriental book of Job, who longs to sleep in some cavern for ages, then reappear, and, even if his flesh were shrivelled, find that his good name was vindicated (xiv.). This idea of the Sleeping Hero (which is traced in many examples in my work on *The Wandering Jew*) appears to have gained its earliest expression in the legend of King Yima, in Persia,—the original of such sleepers as Barbarossa and King Arthur, as well as of the legendary Enoch, Moses, and Elias, who were to precede or attend the revived Son of David. Solomon, whose name probably gave Jerusalem the peaceful half of its name (*Salem*) would no doubt have been central among the "Undying Ones" had it not been for the Parliament of Religions he set up in that city. But he had to wait a thousand years for his honorable fame to awaken.

In the "Wisdom of Solomon" the Queen of Sheba is also recalled into life. She is, as Renan pointed out, transfigured in the personified Wisdom, and her gifts become mystical. "All good things together came to me with her," and Wisdom goeth before them: and I knew not that she was the mother of them." She is amiable, beautiful, and gave him his knowledge:

"All such things as are secret or manifest, them I knew. For Wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me: for in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only, manifold; subtle, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having all power, over-seeing all things, and pervading all intellectual, pure, and most subtle spirits. For Wisdom is more moving

than motion itself; she passeth and goeth through all things by reason of her pureness. For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty: therefore can no impure thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness. And alone, she can do all things; herself unchanged, she maketh all things new; and in all ages, entering into holy souls, she maketh them intimates of God, and prophets. For God loveth only him who dwelleth with Wisdom. She is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars; compared with the light she is found before it,—for after light cometh night, but evil shall not prevail against Wisdom.” (vii. 21-30.)

In *Sophia Solomontos* Solomon relates his espousal of Wisdom, who sat beside the throne of God (ix. 4). But there remains with God a detective Wisdom called the Holy Spirit. Wisdom and the Holy Spirit have different functions. “Thy counsel who hath known except thou give Wisdom, and send thy Holy Spirit from above?” This verse (ix. 17) is followed by two chapters (x., xi.) relating the work of Wisdom through past ages as a Saviour. But then comes an account of the severe chastening functions of the Holy Spirit. “For thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things (i. e., nothing is concealed from her), therefore chastenest thou them by little and little that offend,” etc. (xii. 1, 2.)

There is here a slight variation in the historic development of the Spirit of God, and one so pregnant with results that it may be well to refer to some of the earlier

Hebrew conceptions. The Spirit of God described in Genesis i. 2, as "brooding" over the waters was evidently meant to represent a detached agent of the deity. The legend is obviously related to that of the dove going forth over the waters of the deluge. The dove probably acquired its symbolical character as a messenger between earth and heaven from the marvellous powers of the carrier pigeon—powers well known in ancient Egypt—it also appears that its cooing was believed to be an echo on earth of the voice of God.\* We have already seen (viii.) that Wisdom, when first personified, was identified with this "brooding" spirit over the surface of the waters, and also that in a second (Jahvist) personification she is a severe and reproving agent. But in the second verse of Genesis there is a darkness on the abyss, and both darkness and abyss were personified. In the rigid development of monotheism all of these beings were necessarily regarded as agents of Jahveh—monopolist of all powers. We thus find such accounts as that in 1 Samuel 16, where the Spirit of Jahveh departed from Saul and an evil Spirit from Jahveh troubled him.

Although the Spirit of God was generally supposed to convey miraculous knowledge, especially of future events, and superior skill, it is not, I believe, in any book earlier than *Sophia Solomontos* definitely ascribed the function of a detective. There is in Ecclesiastes (x. 20) a passage which suggests the carrier: "Curse not the King, no, not in thy thought; and curse not the rich even in thy bedchamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the

\* Bath Kol,— "daughter of a voice."

matter."\* This was evidently in the mind of the writer of *Sophia Solomontos* in the following verses:

Wisdom is a loving Spirit, and will not (cannot?) acquit a blasphemer of his words: for God is a witness of his reins, and a true beholder of his heart, and a hearer of his tongue; for the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world, and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the voice; therefore he that speaketh unrighteous things cannot be hid, neither shall vengeance when it punisheth, pass by him. For inquisition shall be made into the counsels of the ungodly; the sound of his words shall come unto the Lord for the disclosure of his wickedness, the ear of jealousy heareth all things, and the sound even of murmurings is not secret."

Here we have the origin of the "unpardonable sin." The Holy Spirit detects and informs, Jahveh avenges, and if the offence is blasphemy, Wisdom, the Saviour, cannot acquit (as the "Loving Spirit" of God it is for her *ultra vires*). This detective Holy Spirit appears to be an evolution from both Wisdom and Satan the Accuser, in Job a Son of God. By associating with Solomon on earth, Wisdom was without the severe holiness essential to Jahvist conceptions of divine government; in other words, personified Wisdom, whose "delight was with the sons of men" (Prov. viii. 31) was too humanized to fulfil the conditions necessary for upholding the temple at a time when penal sanctions were withdrawn from the priesthood. A celestial spy was needed, and also an uncomfortable *Sheol*, if the ancient ordinances and sacrifices were to be preserved

\*This may, however, have been flotsam from the Orient. Mahanshadha, a sort of Solomon in Buddhist tales (see *ante* chap ii), had a wonderful parrot, Charaka, which he employed as a spy. It revealed to him the plot to poison King Janaka, whose chief Minister he was. (*Tibetan Tales*, p. 168.)

at all under the rule of Roman liberty, and amid the cosmopolitan conditions prevailing at Jerusalem, and still more at Alexandria.\*

With regard to Wisdom herself, there is a sentence which requires notice, especially as no unweighed word is written in the work under notice. It is said, "In that she is conversant with God, she magnifieth her nobility; yea, the Lord of all things himself loved her." (viii. 3).† This seems to be the germ of Philo's idea of Wisdom as the Mother: "And she, receiving the seed of God, with beautiful birth-pangs brought forth this world, His visible Son, only and well-beloved." The writer of *Sophia Solomontos* is very careful to be vague in speculations of this kind, while suggesting inferences with regard to them. Thus, alluding to Moses before Pharaoh, he says, "She (Wisdom) entered into the servant of the Lord, and withstood dreadful kings in wonders and signs" (x. 16), but leaves us to mere conjecture as to whether he (the writer) still had Wisdom in mind when writing (xvii. 13) of the failure of these enchantments and the descent of the Almighty Word, for the destruction of the first-born:

"For while all things are quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty Word leaped down from Heaven out of thy Royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land

\* M. Didron (*Christian Iconography*, Bohu's ed., i., p. 464) mentions a picture of the thirteenth century in which the dove moving over the face of the waters (Gen. 1) is black, God not having yet created light. It may be, however, that the mediæval idea was that the Holy Ghost, as a heavenly spy, was supposed to assume the color of the night in order to detect the deeds done in darkness without itself being seen. In later centuries this dark dove was shown at the ear of magicians and idols, the inspirer of prophets and saints being the white dove.

† The amorous relations between Ahuramazda, the deity, and Armaiti, genius of the earth, are referred to *ante* Chap. VIII., in a passage from West's Palahvi Texts. In the Vendidad she is sometimes called his daughter.

of destruction; and brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword, and standing up filled all things with death; and it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth."\*

The Word in this place (ὁ παντοδύναμός σου λόγος) is clearly reproduced in the Epistle to the Hebrews (iv. 12). "The Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword;" and the same military metaphor accompanies this "Word" into Revelation xix. 13. This continuity of metaphor has apparently been overlooked by Alford (*Greek Testament*, vol. iv., p. 226) who regards the use of the phrase "Word of God" (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) as linking Revelation to the author of the fourth Gospel, whereas in this Gospel Logos is never followed by "of God," while it is so followed in Hebrews iv. 12.

This evolution of the "Word" is clear. In the "Wisdom of Solomon" Wisdom is the creative Word and the Saviour. The Word leaping down from the divine throne and bearing the sword of vengeance is more like the son of the celestial counterpart of Wisdom, namely, the detective Holy Spirit (called in i. 5 "the Holy Spirit of Discipline"). But in the era we are studying, all words by able writers were living things, and were two-edged swords, and long after they who wrote them were dead went on with active and sundering work undreamed of by those who first uttered them.

The Zoroastrian elements which we remarked in Jesus Ben Sira's "Wisdom" are even more pronounced in the "Wisdom of Solomon." The Persian worshippers are so mildly rebuked (xiii.) for not passing

\* Cf. Gospel of Peter: "They behold three men coming out of the tomb, and the two supporting the one, and the cross following them, and the heads of the two reached to the heavens, and that of him who was being Jéd went above the heavens."

beyond fire and star to the "origin of beauty," that one may suppose the author, probably an Alexandrian, must have had friends among them. At any rate his conception of a resplendent God is Mazdean, his all-seeing Holy Spirit is the Parsi "Anahita," and his Wisdom is Armaiti, the "loving spirit" on earth, the saviour of men.\* The opposing kingdoms of Ahuramazda and Angromainyu, and especially Zoroaster's original division of the universe into "the living and the not-living," are reflected in the "Wisdom of Solomon," i. 13-16:

"God made not death: neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living. He created all things that they might have their being; and the generations of the world were healthful; and there (was) no poison of destruction in them, nor (any) kingdom of death on the earth: (for righteousness is immortal): but ungodly men with their deeds and words evoked Death to them: when they thought to have it their friend they consumed to naught, and made a covenant with Death, being fit to take sides with it."

In the moral and religious evolution which we have been tracing it has been seen that the utter indifference of the Cosmos to human good and evil, right and wrong, was the theme of Job; that in Ecclesiastes the same was again declared, and the suggestion made that if God helped or afflicted men it must depend on some point of etiquette or observance unconnected with moral con-

\* Invoke, O Zoroaster, the powerful Spirit (Wind) formed by Mazda (Light) and Spenta Armaiti (earth-mother), the fair daughter of Ahuramazda. Invoke, O Zoroaster, my Fravashi (deathless past), who am Ahuramazda, greatest, fairest, most solid, most intelligent, best shapen, highest in purity, whose soul is the holy Word.

"Invoke Mithra (descending light), the lord of wide pastures, a god armed with beautiful weapons, with the most glorious of all weapons, with the most fiend-smiting of all weapons.

"Invoke the most holy glorious word."—*Zendavesta*. (Venl. Farg. .xix. 2)

siderations, so that man need not omit pleasure but only be punctilious when in the temple; that in Jesus Ben Sira's contribution to his fathers' "Wisdom," the moral character of God was maintained, moral evil regarded as hostile to God, and imaginary sanctions invented, accompanied by pleadings with God to indorse them by new signs and wonders. Such signs not appearing, and no rewards and punishments being manifested in human life, the next step was to assign them to a future existence, and this step was taken in "Wisdom of Solomon." There remained but one more necessity, namely, that there should be some actual evidence of that future existence. Agur's question had remained unanswered—

"Who has ascended into heaven and come down again?

Such an one would I question about God."

To this the reply was to be the resurrection from death claimed for the greatest of the spiritual race of Solomon.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS (A SEQUEL TO SOPHIA SOLOMONTOS).

In a Theocracy the birth of a new God was not the mere new generalization that it might be in our secularized century,—a deification of the Unknowable, for instance,—of not the slightest practical or moral interest to any human being. Judea was the bodily incarnation, even more than Islam is now, of a deity who said, “I am the Lord and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I the Lord do all these things.” The denial of such a deity, the substitution of one who required neither prayers, sacrifices, nor intercessions, could not be merely theoretical. It must involve the overthrow of a nationality which had no bond of unity except a book, and the institutions founded on that book.

Nor did the theocratic principle admit of a mere philosophical opposition to its institutions. He who touched that system was dealing with people who, in the language of “Sophia Solomontos” were “shut up in a prison without iron bars.” The natural advent of the anti-Jahvist was in the Temple and with the words—

He hath sent me to herald glad news to the poor,  
He hath sent me to proclaim deliverance to captives,  
And recovering of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty them that are bruised.

These miseries had no real relation to the social or political conditions amid which their phrases and hymns were born, but to a burden of debts to a jealous and vindictive omnipotence; a burden not of actions really wrong, but of mysterious offences, related to incomprehensible ordinances and heavenly etiquette. No human vices are so malignant as inhuman virtues.

Bunyan, in depicting Christian's burden, has, with a felicity perhaps unconscious, made it a pack strapped on. It is not a hunch, not any part of the pilgrim, and had he possessed the courage to examine it there must have been found many spiritual nightmares of the race, and many robust English virtues turned to sins when the merry and honest tinker turned retrospective Rip Van Winkle, and dreamed himself back into the year One. The burden of sins on the poor Israelites had been gradually getting lighter under the scepticism of the Wisdom school, in view of the failure of Jahveh to fulfil the menaces and sentences of the priesthood. Conformity was secured mainly for actual advantages bestowed by the synagogue, or its terrors. But the discovery of the doctrine of a future life and a day of judgment, when all the mysterious "sins" were to be settled for, while smiled at by the Saducees, made the burden of the ignorant poor intolerable. Life was passed under suspended swords. The priesthood had a covering vassal in every ignorant human being. The time, the labour, the flocks of the peasantry were devoted, but it was all a "sweating" process,—the debts were never paid, and there was always that "certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries." No doubt

even the learned supposed these superstitions useful to keep the "masses" in order.

But one day a scholarly gentleman, a man of genius, was moved with compassion for these poor lost and priest-harried sheep: he turned aside from his college and his rank, and became their shepherd; he declared they owed no duties to any deity, and that the heavenly despot they so dreaded had no existence.

A modern gentleman in a fine mansion and estate may be amused at Bunyan's quaint pilgrim, reading in a book and discovering that he was in a City of Destruction, fleeing with a burden on his back, and rejoicing when it rolls off at the cross. But if this gentleman should suddenly receive from some distant personage papers showing that his estate had been entirely mortgaged by his father, that it would soon be claimed and his family reduced to beggary, he might understand the City of Destruction. And if, soon after, some visitor arrived to state that the holder of the mortgages was dead; that those claims had all legally fallen into his own hands, and that he had burnt them, the rolling off of Christian's burden might be appreciated,—also the enthusiasm of the personal followers of Jesus.

But one might further imagine a host of hungry lawyers, living on large retainers, not being quite happy at such easy settlements, especially if the generous visitor were found wealthy enough to go about buying up and burning claims, and ending litigation. This, to us hardly imaginable, was, however, actually the condition of things reflected in parts of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Therein the bond under which man suffers

is clearly to him who hath the Power of Death, the DEVIL: Jesus ransomed man from the Devil.

The anonymous tractate superscribed solely "To the Hebrews," though the last admitted into the New Testament, is probably the earliest document it contains. It has no doubt been tampered with, but the evidences of the early date of its conception of Christ remain. Not only was it evidently written before the destruction of the temple (*anno 70*), but before there was any thought of a mission to the Gentiles, who, with Paul their apostle, are ignored. Some of its phrases and illustrations are found in epistles of Paul, but, as Dr. Davidson pointed out in his *Introduction to the New Testament*, the general doctrine of this treatise is far from Pauline, and it is difficult to find any reason for supposing that the few borrowings were not by Paul, other than a preference for Paul, and disinclination to admit that there is any anonymous work in the New Testament. The treatise is without Paul's egotism, or his fatalism, and its conception of the new movement seems decidedly more primitive than that in the recognised Pauline epistles. The sagacious Eusebius, "father of church history," connects the Epistle "To the Hebrews" with the "Wisdom of Solomon," and it seems clear that we have here the bridge between the last abutment of philosophic or "broad" Jahvism, and its "new departure" as Christism.

It is not of especial importance to the present inquiry to determine that Paul might not at some youthful period have written this work, though I cannot see how any critical reader can so imagine; but it will bear indirectly on that point if we read successively the following corresponding passages:

*Wisdom of Solomon.*—"For Wisdom, which is the worker of all things, taught me . . . she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty; therefore can no unclean thing fall into her. For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness. And alone she can do all things; herself unchanged, she maketh all things new: and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets."—(vii. 25-27.) "And Wisdom was with thee: which knoweth thy works, and was present when thou madest the world." (ix. 9.)

*Epistle to the Hebrews.*—"God, having in time past spoken to the fathers by many fragments and divers ways in the prophets, at the end of these days spake unto us in Son whom he constituted heir of all things, by whom also he fashioned the ages: who, being the brightness of his light and the image of his substance, and guiding all things by the word of his authority, having made purification of sins, sat on the right of majesty in high places." (i. 1-3.)

*Epistle to the Colossians.*—"Who (the Father) delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his son of love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and above the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things hold together." (i. 13-17.)

*Fourth Gospel.*—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in him, and the life was the light of men. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory—glory as of an only begotten of a Father full of grace and truth." (i. 1-15.)

It appears to me that the evolution is represented in the order given. Paul's phrase, "first-born of all crea-

tion," is an amplification of the word "first-born" used in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but there used in another connection,—and not solely, as we shall see, relating to Christ. Paul's phrase corresponds with "the only-begotten," etc., of John, and with the "son constituted heir" of the Epistle to the Hebrews, though the latter is a different Christological conception. When this writer's doctrinal statement is finished, and after his argument is begun, he says (i. 6), "But when of old bringing the first-born into the inhabited earth, he saith, And pay homage to him all angels of God." The word "first-born" here is probably the seed from which Paul develops his full flower of doctrine, given above. Paul's conception of a creative Christ seems later than the "guiding" Christ (Heb. i. 3), which recalls the function of Wisdom as "director" at the creation (Prov. viii. 30); and the idea in this epistle to the Hebrews of a previous and historical Christophany, while harmonious with that of the "Wisdom of Solomon" (vii. 27),—that she (Wisdom) "in all ages enters into holy souls,"—is so primitive, unique, and so foreign to Paul, that the writer may have been one of those accused by him of preaching "another Jesus" (2 Cor. ii. 4).\*

\* Since this work was sent to the press the world has been enriched by Dr. McGiffert's "History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age." He pronounces the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews "without doubt the finest and most cultured literary genius of the primitive church," but believes the Epistle to be somewhat later than those of Paul. He thinks its detailed description of proceedings in the temple might have been written after its destruction, as Clement's account was, and remarks that the writer always calls it the "tabernacle." This peculiarity I attribute to the emphasis in the "Wisdom of Solomon" on the temple being "a resemblance of the holy tabernacle which thou hast prepared from the beginning" (ix. 8). It seems unlikely that the Epistle could have said "the priests go in continually" etc., had the temple not existed. Dr. McGiffert finds in some expressions indications that there were Gentiles among those to whom the Epistle was addressed, but even admitting this it is natural to suppose that there must have been some fellowship of this kind among educated people before Paul's propaganda. The passages referred to by Dr. McGiffert, if they imply what he supposes, render it all the more improbable that if Paul and his mission to the Gentiles preceded this Epistle, there should be no allusion to them in it.

Although this Epistle contains the principle ascribed to Jesus, "charity and not sacrifice" (xiii. 9) and substitutes for beasts the "sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips harmonious with his good name" (verse 15), the letter that killeth brought forth from the same chapter the fatal doctrine that the body of Jesus was a sacrifice to be eaten. And although this emphasizes the completeness of his humanity to an extent inconsistent with his deity, it is on the letter of this Epistle that the deification of Christ is founded.

V. 7-9. "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up entreaties with vehement crying and tears to him able to save him out of death, and *although* inclined to because of his piety, yet, albeit a son, learned obedience by the things he suffered; and having been made perfect, became unto all that follow him the author of eternal salvation."\*

He is represented as "made perfect through sufferings," as "tempted in all points like (?others) without sin," and as having without assistance of temple or sacrifices, "obtained eternal redemption" (ix. 12). Thus he also needed redemption.

The new covenant of which Jesus was the founder is described in the words of Jeremiah (xxxi.):

\*Thus spake Angra Mainyu, the guileful, the evil-doer, the deadly, "Fiend rush down upon him, destroy the holy Zoroaster!" The fiend came rushing along, the demon Būiti, the unseen death, the hell-born. Zoroaster chanted loudly the Ahuna-Vairya: "The will of the Lord is the law of holiness; the riches of Vohu-manō (heavenly wisdom) shall be given to him who works in this world for God (Mazda), and wields according to the all-knowing (Ahura) the power he gave him to relieve the poor. Profess (O Fiend) the law of God!" The fiend dismayed rushed away, and said to Angra Mainyu "O baneful Angra Mainyu, I see no way to kill him, so great is the glory of the holy Zoroaster." Zoroaster saw all this from within his soul; "The evil-doing devils and demons take counsel together for my death." Up started Zoroaster, forward went Zoroaster, unshaken by the evil spirit, "O evil-doer, Angra Mainyu, I will smite the creation of the Evil One (Daeva) till the fiend-smiter Saoshyant (Saviour) come up to life out of the lake Kasava, from the region of the dawn."—Vendidād, Farg. xix. 1-5. (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. iv. pp. 204-6.)

The Ahuna-Vairya, recited by Zoroaster, was the prayer by which Ormazd in his first conflict with Ahreiman drove him back to hell.

I will put my laws into their mind,  
And on their heart will I write them  
And I will be to them a God,  
And they shall be to me a people:  
And they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen,  
And every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord:  
For all shall know me,  
From the least unto the greatest.

In quoting this the writer to the Hebrews adds: "In that he saith, 'A new (covenant) he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is near unto vanishing entirely.'" Here is a primitive Quakerism, but more conservative; not like George Fox at once sweeping away priesthood sacraments and ecclesiastical laws before the Inner Light, but pointing to their near vanishing.

The writer of this Epistle is a philosophical conservative; he shudders at the idea of a swift and complete overthrow of the traditional system, and even borrows its old thunders against levitical sin to menace offences against the new moral God. "Our God [also] is a consuming fire." It is evident by his very warnings that a great anti-sacerdotal and anti-levitical revolution had taken place, and that the free spirit was burgeoning out in excesses. But such is his culture that one may suspect his thunders of being theatrical, and that he thinks some superstition necessary for the masses.

The fatal and subtle character of the detective Holy Spirit is imported into this Epistle from the "Wisdom of Solomon" (i. 6), though not so distinctly personified. The sin afterwards called "unpardonable" is here a sin against Christ for which repentance, not pardon, is impossible. We may perhaps find in some of the



expressions germs of the legend of Judas. "As touching those who were once enlightened, and tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age that is come, and fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, seeing they individually impale the Son of God afresh and put him to open shame" (vi. 5, 6). The believers are "not of them that shrink back into perdition" (x. 39); and they are warned to look carefully "whether there be any man that falleth back from the grace of God. . . . like Esau, who for one mess of meat sold his own birthright" (xii. 15, 16). The words "tasted," "perdition," "sold," might start a legend of the betrayal, first alluded to by Paul (if 1 Cor. xi. 23 be genuine, which is doubtful), though had the legend of Judas then existed this writer would naturally have alluded to him along with Esau.

This Epistle is the nursery of the titles of Christ; he is Apostle, Son of God, Son of Man, Great Shepherd, Captain of Salvation, Mediator, Great High Priest; and here alone is found the now familiar endearing phrase "Our Lord." These titles represent the functions of different beings in the Avesta. The conception of the work of Jesus on earth is largely Zoroastrian. The Majesty on high has a colony and a people on earth, which otherwise is under the supremacy of the Evil One. As we have seen the Avestan definitions of Ahuramazda and Angra Mainyu, "the Living and the Not Living," are reflected in the phrases of this Epistle,—the "Power of Imperishable Life" (vii. 16) and the "Power of Death" (ii. 14). Ahuramazda, when his "habitable earth" was prepared,

brought into it his "first-born," Yima, and wished him to propagate the divine law which should destroy the power of Angra Mainyu on earth and confine him in the underworld. Yima replied, "I was not born, I was not taught, to be the preacher and the bearer of thy law." He engaged, however, to enlarge and nourish the garden of God on earth, of which he was king, and entitled "the good shepherd." He obtained from the Holy Spirit, Anâhita, the powers thus enumerated in *Abân Yast* 26: "He begged of her a boon, saying, 'Grant me this, O good, most beneficent Ardvi Sûra Anâhita, that I may become the sovereign lord of all countries, of the *dævas* [devils] and men, of the *Yâtus* [sorcerers] and *Pairkas* [seducing nymphs], of the oppressors [who afflict] the blind and the deaf; and that I may take from the *dævas* [devils] both riches and welfare, both fatness and flocks, both weal and glory" [*hvarenô*, "the glory from above which makes the king an earthly god"].\* This "first-born" reigned a thousand years, but then, having ascribed his "glory" to the demons from whom he obtained wealth and material benefits, his "glory" was lost, and secured by the Devil, who reigned in his place a thousand years, blighting the world, when Zoroaster was born to undertake the establishment of the divine Law on earth. Yima was ultimately developed into the Jamshid of Persian mythology, whose power over demons, fabulous wealth, and ultimate fall (through declaring himself a god, according to Firdusi) invested the legend of Solomon.

From the legend of Solomon and the Solomonic Psalms the Epistle to the Hebrews brings its exaltation

\* *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. xxiii. p. 59.

of Christ. From Ps. lxxxix. 26-7, as reproduced in 2 Sam. vii. 14, is quoted (i. 5) the divine promise, "I will be to him (Solomon) a Father and he shall be my Son," along with the manifesto at Solomon's enthronement (Ps. ii. 7), "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Solomon is the "first-born" alluded to in Heb. i. 6: "When of old bringing the first-born into the inhabited earth ( *οἰκουμένην* ) he saith, And pay homage to him all angels of God?"

And here we have an interesting example of evolution in the Solomon legend. The term "first-born," as indicating the relation of a human being to the deity, occurs but once in the Old Testament, namely, in Psalm lxxxix. 27. It occurs in a strange passage that must be quoted:

19. Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy ones,  
And saidst, I have laid help upon a youth;  
I have raised *one* elected out of the people.
20. I have discovered David, my servant:  
With my holy oil have I anointed him,
21. By whom my hand shall be established,  
Whom also mine arm shall strengthen.
22. The enemy shall not do him violence,  
Nor the son of evil afflict him.
23. I will beat down his adversaries before him  
And smite them that hate him.
24. But my faithfulness and my mercy *end not* with him,  
And in my name shall his horn be exalted.
25. I will extend his hand on the sea also,  
And his right hand on the rivers:
26. He shall address me, "Thou, my father,  
My God, and the rock of my support";
27. In answer I constitute him first-born.  
Elyon of the kings of the earth.

Although in all of these verses the Davidic royalty is exalted, the reference to David's own reign passes at

verse 24 into a celebration of Solomon. Here, as in Psalm cxxxii. 17, Solomon is the "horn" of David: he was distinctively the power on sea and river, phrases inapplicable to David, and there is a contrast between the anointed "servant" (verse 20) and the "first-born" (verse 27). The next title, "Elyon" (Most High), comes very near to that of the deity (El Elyon) of the mysterious priest-king of Salem, Melchizedek, whose mythical character and identity with the legendary Solomon will be hereafter considered.

Here we have no doubt the germs of the narrative in 2 Sam. vii. of the formal adoption of Solomon as Jahveh's son, with the addition of a metaphysical connotation of the sonship not found in the Psalm. In the Psalm the fatherhood is that of support, the position of "first-born" is that of chieftainship among kings; and it is further said (31, 32) that if any of the sons of the Davidic line profane the divine statutes, "Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." But in 2 Sam. vii. 14, Jahveh applies this warning to Solomon alone, and with a remarkable modification: "I will be his father and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the sons of men; but my mercy shall not depart from him." That is, though a son of God he may be chastened like the sons of men,—an intimation of a difference between Solomon and ordinary human nature not intended in the words of the Psalm.

The Epistle to the Hebrews, finding in this Psalm an introduction of "first-born" into the world, for there is no article preceding the word, follows it so closely as to

omit any article before "son" (i. 2). He finds this in an address of the deity to his angels ("holy ones" or saints), and understands verse 27 of the Psalm to mean that they, the angels, are to worship the "first-born" as the Elyon, or Most High on earth. From 2 Sam. vii. the Epistle gets sufficient authority for ascribing an eternal personality to the sonship, anciently represented by Solomon, and we may thus see that the gesture of Hebrew religion towards a doctrine of incarnation was much earlier than is generally supposed. And this, too, is the Hebrew contribution to a Psalm which, in the nine verses above quoted, imports ideas foreign to Judaism. The reciprocal help of the deity and the king (19-21) is Avestan, and inconsistent with monotheism. Elyon is the name of an ancient Phœnician god, slain by his son El, no doubt the "first-born of death" in Job xviii. 13, and the violent "son of evil," in verse 22 of our Psalm. The exaltation of both David and Solomon in the Psalm is primarily in reference to service and deeds, not majesty, essence, or title; of these Avestan religion made little, but Hebraism made much, and the deification of Solomon, though warranted by other Psalms, is added to this eighty-ninth by Samuel and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In Ecclesiasticus it is written: "In the division of the nations of the whole earth he set a ruler over every people; but Israel is the Lord's portion: whom, being his first-born, he nourisheth with discipline, and giving him the light of his love doth not forsake him. . . . For all things cannot be in men, because the son of man is not immortal. What is brighter than the sun? Yea: the light thereof faileth; and flesh and blood will imagine evil" (xvii.). Now in the Zoroastrian theology

there could be no direct contact of God with matter: the devil's empire could be invaded and death conquered only by a perfectly "blameless" MAN. (Cf. "Wisdom of Solomon," xviii. 21, with the "sinless" of Heb. iv. 15, the "guileless" of vii. 26, and "without blemish," ix. 14). The spotless one can use no carnal weapon. In the Zoroastrian theology the divine potency is that of the Word, and formulas exist to be wielded against every variety of demon. So in this Epistle the supremacy of the Son is by "the word of his power" (i. 3), and "the Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword" (iv. 12).

The enterprise of the Son of God was to fulfil these conditions. He must become a complete man, share all the infirmities of man, all his liabilities to temptation, receive no assistance from his Father, no angelic help,—placed lower than the angels,—and confront the powers of Death and Hell without any material weapon. If he succeeded in remaining sinless, faithful to the divine law, even unto death, even while in hell, unshaken by threats, sufferings, or seductions, it must be a purely human achievement. There was no miracle; even the suspicion of using supernatural power would have tainted the whole work of Jesus as conceived in this Epistle.

This undertaking was not simply for the sake of mankind. All things are not yet subjected to the divine sway (Heb. ii. 8). Heaven itself was shaken, when the old covenant failed, and trembled for the result of the tremendous conflict of the Son of Man on earth with its Prince and his hosts (Heb. xii. 25-29). This was "the joy in front of him" (xii. 2), as well as the rescue of men.

Thus was the man left entirely to the devil, not even his life being reserved, as in the case of Job. He loudly cries for help, even with tears, at the sight of Death; he is heard, pitied, but no help comes. He must trust to his human merits, and not miracles, for his Sonship is of no value in this conflict. By his obedience learned in his sufferings, by his sinlessness under all trials and temptations, he fulfilled the conditions of deathlessness. By his own heart's blood, not by offerings of bloody sacrifices, not by supernatural power, he reached the place of holiness, "having obtained eternal redemption." From first to last there was no divine aid. His unanswered loud cries (Heb. v. 7) may be connected with the legend of his expiring cry, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Much of the thought here is similar to the "Wisdom of Solomon" (ii. 22-4, iii. 1-9), where however the ideas are conflicting. It is said, "God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity: nevertheless, through the devil's envy came death into the world, and they that hold of his side do find it." But then Jahvism puts in with the declaration that the seeming destruction of the righteous is God's chastisement and probation of them. The Epistle to the Hebrews does not regard the sufferings and death of Jesus as God's work at all, but all from the devil. Though God spoke by him there is no suggestion that he sent Jesus, or that his coming was not voluntary.

With this reservation, and a large one it is, that Jesus was not delivered up to Satan by God, but left to confront his torments in an effort to subdue him, "bring him to nought," the central idea of the Epistle is a doctrinal transfiguration of Job, who being delivered up

to Satan, triumphs over the tempter and tormentor, and through all preserves his sinlessness and loyalty to God. The result being that those who had denied Job's merits, his sinlessness, had to secure Job's intercession in order to escape the penalty of having ascribed his sufferings to God (Job xlii. 8).<sup>\*</sup> This relationship of ideas is all the more interesting because apparently unconscious in the writer of the Epistle, and thus revealing the extent to which Oriental religion had remoulded Judaism among the educated Jews of his time. Monotheism is strictly inconsistent with the supremacy of "merits" which is the very soul of Oriental religion. The sacred books of India contain records of saints or Rishis who by extraordinary austerities, sacrifices, and virtues so piled up their "merits" that the gods were frightened, as they were at the tower of Babel; and sometimes the gods tempted these powerful saints to commit some sin that would reduce their "merits." The Solomonic "Proverbs" are pervaded by the Oriental doctrine of "merits": a man is proved by test of his merits, as gold passing through the furnace (xxvii. 21); the perfect inherit good (xxviii. 10); and perhaps that sublime pedlar of transcendent gems imported along with the gold of Ophir some version of the Puranic legend of Harischandra, "the Hindu Job." All the Jahvist adulterations of the biblical version do not conceal the fact that when Jahveh, by delivering the meritorious man up to Satan, delivered himself also into the hands of Satan, he (Jahveh) was compelled to surrender before the merits on which the man had planted himself. Jahveh reclaimed his sovereignty, but agreed that Job, who had said "God hath wronged

<sup>\*</sup>It is even doubtful whether they were not ordered to offer burnt offerings to Job as a deity.



me," had spoken of him "the thing that is right" (xl. 8). In the same way the storm-god Indra (the Hindu Jahveh) accompanied by all the gods, headed by Dharma (Justice), appears to Harischandra after his trials, and tells him that he, his wife and son, had, by their merits, "conquered heaven" (*Markandeya Purana*). The completion of these merits was when Harischandra resolved with his wife to die on the funeral pyre of their son, who, as a result of their torments, had died by a serpent's bite. It was then that the god Indra appeared to restore the son, and admit that the just and faithful king, his wife and son, had "conquered heaven." We are thus carried to the Solomonic affirmations that "when the whirlwind passeth the just man is on an everlasting foundation" (Prov. x. 25), that "justice delivereth from death" (x. 2), that "the just man finds a refuge in death" (xiv. 32); and we are carried forward to the Epistle to the Hebrews, where, after the last ordeal, death, the son of the heavenly king is restored to life, and Satan, who had over him the power of death, "brought to nought" (ii. 14). But further, in the Puranic legend, which from time immemorial has been a passion-play in India, Harischandra, when told that he, his wife and son, had "conquered heaven," refused to ascend to heaven without his "faithful subjects." "This request was granted by Indra, and after Viswamitra had inaugurated Rohitaswa, the king's son, to be his successor, Harischandra, his friends and followers, all ascended to heaven." Thus, in our Epistle, the son, having "learned obedience by the things which he suffered, and having been made perfect, became unto all them that obeyed him the author of eternal salvation." "For in that he hath him-

self suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." The subjects of King Harischandra who remained faithful to him after he was reduced to beggary, ascended with him. Faith is declared in our Epistle to be "the testing of things not seen" (xi. 1), and faithfulness is to "run with patience the course that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the captain and perfector of faithfulness, who for the joy set before him endured the stake (*σταυρόν*), despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (xi. 1, xii. 1, 2).

And there is also, I believe, in the scheme of redemption set forth in this Epistle, an influence from the story of King Usinára in the Mahábhárata, of which there were various versions which must have been familiar to the Buddhists in Alexandria. A dove pursued by a falcon takes refuge in the bosom of Usinára; the falcon demands its surrender. The King quotes the law of Manu that it is a great sin to abandon any being that has taken asylum with one. The falcon urges that it is the law of nature that falcons shall feed on doves, and that unless this dove is surrendered its little falcons must starve. The King offers other food, but the only substitute that is adapted to the falcon's nature is a quantity of Usinára's own flesh equal to the weight of the dove. To this the King agrees. Balances are produced, and the dove placed in one scale, in the other a piece of the King's flesh, which seems large enough, but is insufficient. Though the King cuts off piece by piece all of his flesh, the dove outweighs it, until at length Usinára gets into the scale HIMSELF. That outweighs the dove, which is really Agni, the falcon being Indra. The gods who had assumed these forms in order

to test Usinára's fidelity to the law of sanctuary, resume their shape, and the King ascends transfigured to paradise. In one version a King (Givi) sacrifices his son, Vrihad-Gasbha in obedience to sacred requirements, the story resembling that of Abraham and Isaac. Alford calls attention to the emphasis on the word "himself" in the Epistle of the Hebrews ix. 14: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit offered HIMSELF, without blemish, unto God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

Without blemish! That was the great point. The champion of the Good confronts the champion of Evil, his purpose being to conquer the last enemy, Death, by unarmed human virtue. This was the central idea in the Passion, a drama gone to pieces in the Gospels. Therefore, he did not summon legions of angels, and said to Peter, "Sheath thy sword." Therefore, the mere lynching of Jesus, for such it was, is given the formalities of judicial procedure, in order to impress an official character on the testimonies to his innocence: Pilate, Caiaphas, Pilate's wife, Judas, Herod, all bear witness that no evil is in him, and he challenges the High Priest's court, "If I have uttered evil bear witness of the evil."\* In this passion-drama Jesus Barabbas is set beside Jesus the Christ,—officially proclaimed guilt beside officially proclaimed innocence,—and Wrath selects guilt, condemns innocence. But it was thus the first-born of Life prevailed over the first-

\* It is, I think, an indication of the nearness of the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" to the Apostolic Age that a sort of *caveat* is there recorded against the possible implication that the baptism of Jesus was for remission of sins. "He said to them, Wherein have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him?" The whole passage is quoted on a farther page, but it may be stated here that the descending dove certifies the sinlessness of Jesus before his baptism. The Synoptics introduce the dove after the baptism. The significance of the scene was thus lost.

born of Death. In that crisis the blameless man swerving not from his rectitude, established the "assembly of the first-born," who can dwell with the living God because they have learned from their Captain how to get rid of the defilement of mortality. There is nothing vicarious in his service. The Captain represented the human race in a single combat with Satan, and he discovered for all the vulnerable point of that Adversary,—that he could not hold in sheol a perfectly sinless human being. But it still remained that without holiness no man could see the Lord. Another advantage secured by Jesus for men was that after his victory was achieved the heroic man, on resuming his previous position as Son of God, was able to add thereto what he had won as Son of Man,—the office of high priest or intercessor, who could take good care that every man who fulfilled the condition of holiness got his reward. Satan should not cheat. Nevertheless Jesus had been his own saviour, and every man must be his own saviour.

Pulpit ignorance has wrested from the Epistle to the Hebrews fragments of texts, in support of a dogma of atonement which only a fortunate lack of logic prevents from amounting to a doctrine of human sacrifice. A favorite clause is, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission,"—which is really this epistle's stigma on the system it is abolishing! The sacredness of the blood of Jesus was that it was the price he had to pay to the devil in order to preserve his sinlessness, and so rise from death, and demonstrate to others that they also could rise by sinlessness to eternal life. It might cost their blood also, but would be lost if they "resisted unto blood." Jesus thus brought life and incorrup-

tion, as distinguished from living-death in sheol, to light. And the devotion to Jesus for this was due to the belief that he had laid aside his heavenly glory and become a complete man, and had thus risked his all, his greatness, his very immortality, to make for both heaven and earth the tremendous venture; the slightest misstep, the least sin, or wrath, or impatience, and he would have had his abode in sheol, in bonds of Satan, through all eternity.

When this Epistle was written the believers already found immortality in such faith; with such hope and joy before them they were able to despise sensual joys, to conquer temptations, and to fulfill those duties and conditions of personal holiness which are described in this Epistle,—“Peace with all men, and holiness without which no man can see the Lord.” The ecstasy did not last long, but it was a marvellous phenomenon while it lasted, and the most complete reflection of it may be found in this Epistle to the Hebrews, especially if it be approached by its prologue,—the “Wisdom of Solomon,”—but it is subtle, and can only be comprehended by patient and comparative studies.

At the heart of this earliest and swiftly lost Christianity was a sublime effort to humanize God.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### SOLOMON MELCHIZEDEK.

It is possible that the genealogies of Jesus started from no other basis than Hebrews vii. 14: "It is clear beforehand that our Lord hath arisen out of Judah."\* Yet nothing could be more subversive of the Epistle than a claim of any hereditary authority or advantage for Jesus.

The author of the Epistle, if he ever heard the phrase "Son of David," avoided it, for David is here in the background, and in a quotation from one of his Psalms his name is passed over, with the vague words, "one hath testified somewhere, saying," etc. It is an essential part of the writer's argument that Christ is "without genealogy" of that kind. To some it was no doubt grateful to be told that Jesus was not of the priestly tribe, not of that "apostolic succession," so to say; but it was more important to convince the conservative that their sacred history sanctioned faith in a high priest approved as such not by carnal descent, but by his sinlessness and by his resurrection. But it was not agreeable to any Jewish party to suppose that the new dominion was to be altogether in the heavens, or detached from the Solomonian Golden Age for whose

\* It is doubtful whether this can be regarded as historical. The "clear beforehand" (*πρόδηλον*) renders it more probable that it is a reference to Ps. lxxviii. 67, 68. "He refused the tent of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim, but chose the tribe of Judah," etc.

return they were hoping. The writer therefore connects Jesus with a "first-born" forerunner, namely, with Melchizedek, concerning whom he "has many things to say, and hard of interpretation." So Christian commentators have to this day found what he does say, and Melchizedek is not surrounded by any dogmatic fence that can turn a new hypothesis into a trespass.

The Epistle applies to Jesus lines from Psalm cx. :

Thou art a priest for ever,  
After the order of Melchizedek.

But in this anonymous Psalm there is reason to believe that Melchizedek is not a proper name at all. It is admittedly a combination of *malki*-*tzedeck*, "king of justice," and in the Jewish Family Bible (Deutsch) the above lines are translated, "Thou *art* my priest for ever, my king in righteousness, by my word." The Septuagint, regularly followed by the Epistle to the Hebrews, has Melchizedek in this Psalm cx., which was also messianized by the LXX. in its very first line, "The Lord said unto my Lord," *Κυριός* being the word for Lord in both cases, whereas in the original the words are different ("Jahveh declared to my Adonai"). And it is notable that Matthew xxii. whose Hebraic character is so marked, and Mark xii., both make Jesus follow the Septuagint in quoting these words.

In both of these Gospels the incident is evidently, in Mark clumsily, interpolated, and it would appear to have belonged to some legend of the Infancy, such as that of the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy, where it occurs naturally :

"And when he was twelve years old they took him to Jerusalem to the feast. But when the feast was over they indeed returned, but the Lord Jesus remained in the temple among

the doctors and elders and learned men of Jerusalem, and he asked them sundry questions about the sciences and they answered him in turn. Now he said to them, Whose son is Messiah? They answered him, The son of David. Wherefore, then, said he, Doth he in spirit call him Lord, when he saith the Lord said unto my Lord. Sit thou on my right hand, that I may bring down thy enemies to the footprints of thy feet?"

It is probable that this anecdote had floated down from an early period when the notion of a royal descent of Jesus had not arisen.

Obviously a tremendous question arises here as to how a story should be found in Genesis xiv. about Melchizedek, which as a proper name really occurs nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible,\* and the mystery is increased by the absence of any allusion to such a personage in Jesus Ben Sira's enumeration of "famous men" (Ecclus. xliv.), or elsewhere. It almost looks as if Jesus Ben Sira had not read, or else had cancelled as spurious, the strange passage in Genesis—which is as follows:

"And Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was priest of El-Elyôn. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of El-Elyôn, purchaser of heaven and earth; and blessed be El-Elyôn, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he (Abram) gave him a tenth of all."

Professor Max Müller, in his third lecture on the "Science of Religion," gives some useful information concerning this peculiar name, "El-Elyôn," after consulting his contemporaries at Oxford and in Germany:

"One of the oldest names of the deity among the ancestors of the Semitic nations was *El*. It meant Strong. It occurs in the Babylonian inscriptions as *Ilu*, God, and in the very name of *Bab-il*, the gate or temple of

\* The King of Sodom came out to Abram at the same time, but no proper name is assigned him.



II. . . . The same El was worshipped at Byblus by the Phœnicians, and he was called there the Son of Heaven and Earth. His father was the son of *Eliun*, the most high God, who had been killed by wild animals. The Son of Eliun, who succeeded him, was dethroned, and at last slain by his own son, *El*, whom Philo identifies with the Greek Kronos, and represents as the presiding deity of the planet Saturn . . . *Elyôn*, which, in Hebrew, means the Highest is used in the Old Testament as a predicate of God. . . . It occurs in the Phœnician cosmogony as *Eliun*, the highest God, the Father of Heaven, who was the father of *El*."

According to Sanchunvaton (Euseb. Præp. i. 10) the Phœnicians called God *Σλιῶν*.

The combination El Elyôn occurs in but two chapters in the Bible,—Genesis xiv. and Psalm lxxviii. (The Revisers translate it in Genesis, "God Most High," but in the Psalm (verse 35), "Most High God.") That the name was imported from the earlier into the later chapter is suggested by a similar association of each with the idea of purchase or redemption: "God Most High, purchaser of heaven and earth" (Genesis), "God Most High, their redeemer" (Psalm). But which is the earlier? Probably the Psalm; for it is a long résumé of the traditional history of Israel, but contains no allusion to Abraham. Had its unique name, "El Elyôn," been derived from any such traditional source surely some mention of Abraham would have been made.

The Psalm is Elohist. Possibly the Phœnician name for God, Eliun, was used in order to set "El" above it. Or it may be that as Solomon had been

declared "Elyôn of Kings" (Psalm lxxxix. 27) it was important to recall that he at the same time said, "My Elohim," and to place "El" before his title. This conjecture is warranted by the fact that in both of the Psalms, and in the corresponding passages, God is spoken of as a "Rock." There are other resemblances between the two Psalms, one very striking:

Psalm lxxviii. 70—"He chose David also, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds."

Psalm lxxxix. 19, 20—"I have raised one elected out of the people; I have discovered David, my servant."

The Psalm in which the Septuagint personalizes *malki'-zedek* (cx.) into "Melchizedek" is a fragmentary little piece, with two incomprehensible verses at the end which seem to allude to some legend or folklore now lost. These verses (6 and 7) are incongruous with the preceding ones and must be detached, and perhaps verse 5 also, as this seems an anti-climax. These closing verses look as if they may have been added by some admirer of Joshua's slaughter of kings, and it is probable that the legend of Joshua's making his captains tread on the necks of the five kings (Joshua x.) was developed out of the opening verse of this Psalm:

"Jahveh said to my lord [Adonai], Sit thou at my right hand,  
Until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

The leader of these kings was Adonai-Zedek, who, like Melchizedek, was King of Jerusalem; they are certainly mythical relatives, their names meaning "Lord of Justice" and "King of Justice." It is philologically impossible that any persons with those proper names could have existed in Jerusalem before the invasion of the Hebrews. And "Adonai-bezek," the "radiant lord," whose thumbs and toes Joshua cut off when he

captured Jerusalem, is a transparent variant of Adonai-zedek.

When the city, originally named Jebus, began to be called Salem (see Psalm lxxvi. 2), the aboriginal people who continued to dwell there might naturally dream of their ancient kings, as the Welch and Bretons so long did of Arthur, "flower of kings," and perhaps similarly expect their return to restore their ancient freedom; and it may have become a useful political device to find beyond the ugly legends of Joshua's cruelty to their "just" and "shining" lords a prettier one, made out of an old song, of an earlier "King of Justice," whose bread and wine Abraham had eaten, to whom he had paid tithes, whose deity, El Elyôn, the father of Israel had recognized as his own, and with whom he had made a treaty of *salem*, or peace,—Jebus thus becoming Jebus-Salem (Jerusalem).

Josephus records the legend as it was no doubt generally accepted among the Jews in the first century of our era: "Now, the King of Sodom met him (Abram) at a certain place which they called the King's Dale, where Melchizedek, King of the City of Salem, received him. That name signifies the righteous king, and such he was without dispute, insomuch that on that account he was made the priest of God. However, they afterward called Salem Jerusalem." (Antiq. Bk. i. ch. 10.)

Josephus is careful to identify Salem as Jerusalem, and in vi. ch. 10 of the same work states that the King's Dale (identified as the Shaveh where Abraham met Melchizedek, Genesis xiv.) is "two furlongs distant from Jerusalem." This carefulness may have been intended to distinguish Melchizedek's Salem from the northern Shalem (Genesis xxxiii. 18), a place associ-

ated with Jacob, and apparently representing an attempt to set up a rival temple to that in Jerusalem. It was an old competition about tithes. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, King of Salem, but Jacob, after his vision at Bethel, recognized that as the "house of God," and vowed to give to God a tenth of all that was given him (Genesis xxviii).<sup>\*</sup> This quarrel between rival towns and temples, trying each to draw all tithes to themselves, harmonized in the later legends of the Bible, need not detain us, but it is of importance to remark that the story of Abram meeting the King of Justice and Peace near Jerusalem, and establishing the sanctity of that city, corresponds with, and is counterbalanced by, Jacob's meeting with angels, and wrestling with a mysterious "man," who, it is hinted, was some form of God himself. This reply to the story of Abram suggests that at the time of that tithe controversy between Bethel and Sion Melchizedek was not thought of as a flesh-and-blood king or a mere man, but as a shadowy shape, evoked from actual conditions for certain purposes, and named in accordance with the history or traditions out of which the conditions and the aims were evolved.

<sup>\*</sup> The "Salem" of Gen. xiv. 18, and the "Shalem" of Gen. xxiii. 18, are evidently competitive. Also Jacob's naming his altar "El-Elohe-Israel" seems an answer to Abraham's "El-Elyôn," as if saying that the latter was not the God of Israel. It is even possible that the name "Luz" (Gen. xxviii. 19) changed to Beth-El, after Jacob's vision of the Ladder and setting up the pillar there, is meant to correspond with the "oaks of Mamre" (Gen. xiv. 13), where Abram dwelt when he was met by the priest of El Elyôn. For Abram had also built an altar at some place called Beth-El (Gen. xiii. 3) where he called on the name of the Lord and received a promise that his seed should be "as the dust of the earth," which is verbatim the promise made to Jacob at his Beth-El (Gen. xxviii. 14). Now Abram next moves his tent to the "oak of Mamre" in Hebron (Gen. xiii. 18), and the Hebrew word for oak is *Elah*, or *Eylon*. The unusual name for the deity of both Abram and Melchizedek, *El-Elyon*, was probably selected because of its resemblance to the sacred oak or *Elah* of that place, and Jacob's *El-Elohe-Israel* was no doubt meant to invest his deity with the same sanctity. Now "Luz" also means a tree,—almond-tree,—and was also a name of the Assyrian goddess Ishtar. The oak was associated also with Jacob, who buried beneath it the idols of his household (Gen. xxxv. 19) immediately before setting up his altar at Luz (the almond).

In investigations of this kind, concerned with ages really prehistoric, it is necessary to remember at every step that our search is amid eras when words and names were at once counters of actual forces and factors of history. How serious a play on words may be even in historic times is illustrated by a Papacy founded on the double meaning of *Peter*—a man's name and a rock,—and as we approach earlier epochs, whose issues and struggles have long passed away, and their once antagonistic leaders harmonised by pious legends, it is largely by the aid of words and names that we are enabled to reach even historic probabilities.

As to Melchizedek, my inference above stated, derived from the two tithe legends, that his supernatural character is reflected in that of the corresponding phantoms met by Jacob may not be generally accepted, but that he (Melchizedek) was so understood by the writer to the Hebrews can hardly be disputed. Melchizedek is there (Hebrews vii.) declared to have been "without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, being assimilated unto the Son of God."

In the third century the Melchizedekian sect maintained that Melchizedek was not a man but a heavenly power superior to Jesus, and the Hieracites held similar views. Some eminent theologians have believed that Melchizedek was Christ himself. Most of the Christian theories concerning the mysterious king are virtual admissions that only the eye of faith can see in him any actual being at all. How then was this mythical being formed?\*

\* It may be said in passing, that the legend in Gen. xiv., as was first pointed out in Calmet, bears some resemblance to the Hindu myth of Soma, a lunar being, who discovered the juice of the sacred Soma plant (*Asclepias acida*), called "the king of plants." Soma was the most sacred sacrifice to

1. A suitable nest for the Melchizedek Saga existed near Jerusalem, in a vale called the King's Dale. It seems to have been a royal racing ground (Targum of Onkelos, Gen. xiv. 17) or hippodrome (lxx. xlvi. 7), and its name in Hebrew was *Emek-ham-Melech*.

2. In the ancient Psalm cx. 1 we have Adonai (Lord), and in verse 4 *Melchi-Melech* (or Moloch) king, combined with *tsedek*, justice.

3. *Tsedek* (Tsaydoc or Zadok), the priest who anointed Solomon to be king. Tsaydoc supplanted the legitimate High Priest Abiathar who had taken the side of the legitimate heir to David's throne, Adonijah, supplanted by Solomon. The deprivation of Abiathar, and exaltation of Tsaydoc to be High Priest is said (1 Kings ii. 27) to have been in fulfillment of "the word of Jahveh, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." The reference is to the sentence passed on Eli and his house, to which Abiathar belonged, when Jahveh said, "And I will raise me up a faithful priest, etc.," (1 Sam. ii. 35). Faithful priests

the gods, as a juice; it had the intoxicating effect of wine; and the lunar being, Soma, was believed to be still alive, though invisible, and is the chief of the sacerdotal tribe to this day. In the Vishnu Purana, Soma is called "the monarch of Brahmans." He was the Hindu Bacchus, and is regarded as the guardian of healing plants and constellations. Melchizedek, offering wine to, and as priest of God Most High receiving tribute from, the "High Father" (Abram), thus bears some resemblance to Soma, the sacerdotal moon-god; and those who care to study the matter further may be reminded that in Babylonian mythology Malkit seems to be a "Queen of Heaven" (moon), and is connected by Goldziher (Heb. Myth.) with Milka (Abram's sister-in-law), whom he supposes to have the same meaning. It is remarkable, by the way, that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in telling the story of Abram and Melchizedek minutely and critically, omits the offering of bread and wine. This is not only an indication that the Epistle was written as already said, before Paul's institution of the eucharist (1 Cor. x., xi.), but suggests that the writer may have suspected the offerings as pagan. The Soma juice was sacred also in Persia, and is the *Hôm* of the Avesta. Ewald says of the story in Gen. xiv., "The whole narrative looks like a fragment torn from a more general history of Western Asia, merely on account of the mention of Abraham contained in it." (*Hist. of Israel*, p. 308. London, 1867.) And finally it may be noted that among the kings Abram smote, just before meeting Melchizedek, was Chedorlaomer, King of Elam. Elam is south of Assyria and east of Persia proper; if he fought Abram near Jerusalem, Chedorlaomer was about one thousand miles from his kingdom, Elam. Probably it was not he but a name and legend of his kingdom that drifted into Jewish folklore.

were called "sons of Zadok," the phrase having apparently become proverbial (Ezek. xlv. 15).

4. In 1 Chron. iii. there appear, among the descendants of Solomon, "Amaziah, Azariah his son, Jotham his son." In 1 Chron. vi. we find among descendants of Zadok, Ahimaaz, Azariah his son, Johanan his son. Johanan is also among Solomon's descendants, and among the descendants of both Solomon and Zadok is Shallum,—written by Josephus Salloumos (Bk. x. ch. 8). Josephus also says that Zadok was the first High Priest of Solomon's Temple. But Solomon himself, without the assistance of any priest, dedicated the Temple, offered the sacrifices on that occasion, and so continued: "three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings and peace offerings upon the altar which he built to Jahveh." (1 Kings ix. 25). These statements establish a probability that no such person as Zadok existed at all, and that the development of this personification of justice (*zedek*) into a priestly personage was due to an ecclesiastical necessity of introducing a priest among the provisions of Solomon for the temple. Zadok is thus a detachment from King Solomon of the priestly functions he had discharged in the temple, according to the book of Kings; and in 1 Chron. vi., where this personification is completed, the Solomonic family names are found, as above, recurring as descendants of the personification,—Zadok.

These names are the fossil remains of controversies with Shilonite and Samaritan pretensions, which ended in consecrating the throne and altar at Jerusalem, and they prove that the consecration was that of justice and peace. Of these the Wise Man was typical. Solomon was the model from whom all of these ideals were

painted. His title, Adonai, and his equity (Psalm xlv. 7, 11) are combined in Adonizedek, his glory (Psalm xlv. 3, 4) is in Adonibezek; his high priesthood is allegorized in Zadok; and in "Melchizedek, King of Salem," his supreme characters are summed up, "King of Justice, Prince of Peace."

In a warlike age this peacefulness of a monarch was the great and supernatural phenomenon. It is the very central idea of the whole Solomonic legend. Solomon got his name from it, even the name with Jahveh in it (Jedediah) being set aside; he was preferred above David to build the temple, because David was a warrior; in building the temple the peace was not broken even by the noise of a hammer, the stones being all in shape, it seems by supernatural power, when taken from the quarry, so as to be noiselessly fitted together; he would not fight even those who were rending parts of his kingdom away. He was the hero of the Beatitudes,—the gentle one who inherited the earth, the one who hungered and thirsted for justice and was filled, the peacemaker called the Son of God. It was he who first said, If thine enemy hunger give him food, if he thirst give him drink. And all this was allegorized in Melchizedek, who, when his country was invaded, instead of joining the five kings who resisted, loved his enemy, gave the invader food and drink.

We thus find Solomon,—the glorious cosmopolitan and secularist, whose name Jahvism could not utter without a shudder,—distributed in fable, legend, psalm, through Hexateuch and Hagiographa, and finally transfigured into a type of divine and eternal Sonship. Thus he appears in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to which we now return.



In the Epistle to the Hebrews Christ is invested with the mystical robes of Solomon. To Christ are applied the words, "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son," quoted from Jahveh's promise to David concerning Solomon (2 Sam. vii. 14). To Christ are twice applied the words, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," quoted from Psalm ii. 7, admittedly Solomonic. From Psalm xlv., verses 6 and 7, ascriptions to Solomon, are applied to Christ in this Epistle. And Melchizedek is here declared to be "a great man," "assimilated unto the Son of God."

We may here recall the words of Josephus, a contemporary of our writer, who says that Melchizedek was made the priest of God on account of his righteousness (Ant., Bk. i. ch. 10). It may have been that there was a popular belief in the time of Josephus that Melchizedek received his ordination from Abram himself, but there is no doubt that the mysterious king's priesthood was believed to rest upon his righteousness and above all his peacefulness.

With these preliminaries we may find the Epistle's argument about Melchizedek less "hard of interpretation" than the writer says it is. After speaking of Abraham as having "obtained" the promise, not merely because it was God's promise, but because he "patiently endured," having argued that Christ, "though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things that he suffered", this Epistle maintains (vi. 20) that this is the believer's hope, whereby he enters within the veil, "whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest forever after the manner of Melchizedek." (The sense of this is lost in the E. V. by rendering *γενόμενος* "made": the argument is that

though he was a Son of God even that could not make him a high priest; this he had to "become" by his own merits, uninheritable even from God, as was the case with Melchizedek.) "For this Melchizedek, being of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him, to whom also Abraham divided a tenth part of all (being first by interpretation King of Righteousness, and next also King of Salem, that is Prince of Peace; being without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but assimilated (*ἔχων ἀφωμοτωμένους*) unto the Son of God), abideth a priest perpetually" (vii. 1-3).

The mystical clauses of verse 3 have for centuries been an unsolved enigma to exegetists; and Alford, after summing up the many conjectures as to their meaning, expresses his feeling that the writer had a thought which he did not intend us to comprehend! Probably, however, the writer was using language understood in his time, and which may be interpreted by comparison with expressions familiar in Jewish folklore. Some of these are preserved in the apocryphal gospels. Thus, in the Pseudo-Matthew, Levi, the teacher of Jesus, astounded by the Child's learning, says, "I think he was born before the flood." In the gospel of Thomas, the teacher Zacchæus says, "This child is not of earthly parents, he is able to subdue even fire. Perhaps he was begotten before the world was made." These ideas, which correspond somewhat to the Teutonic superstition of the "changeling," are traceable in the Fourth Gospel (viii. 56-59), where Jesus is stoned for saying, "Before Abraham was I am."

It will be seen that by this early writer "to the He-

brews" Jesus was not thought of in connection with David, but bore Solomon's preëminent title, King of Peace, and that conferred on him by the Queen of Sheba, King of Justice. In the "Wisdom of Solomon" the Prince of the Golden Age, historically associated with idolatrous shrines, had been rehabilitated, even apotheosized; he was now a sort of rival of Jesus in divine sonship. The writer of our Epistle therefore artistically, not to say artfully, utilizes a composite word made into a proper name under which Solomon's combined royalty and priesthood, his peace and justice, had been detached from his personality and personified. The new exaltation of Solomon personally was thus ignored, while his essential glories, his wisdom, and his reclaimed virtues, were woven into the celestial mantle of mysterious Melchizedek, and through him passed to the shoulders of the risen Christ.

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE PAULINE DEHUMANIZATION OF JESUS.

The Queen of Sheba certainly deserved her exaltation as the Hebrew Athena, and the homage paid to her by Jesus, for journeying so far simply to hear the wisdom of Solomon. In Jewish and Christian folklore are many miraculous tales about the Queen's visit, but in the Biblical records, in the books of "Kings" and "Chronicles," the only miracle is the entire absence of anything marvellous, magical, or even occult. The Queen was impressed by Solomon's science, wisdom, the edifices he had built, the civilization he had brought about; they exchanged gifts, and she departed. It is a strangely rational history to find in any ancient annals.

The saying of Jesus cited by Clement of Alexandria, "He that hath marvelled shall reign," uttered perhaps with a sigh, tells too faithfully how small has been the interest of grand people in the wisdom that is "clear, undefiled, plain." They are represented rather by the beautiful and wealthy Marchioness in "Gil Blas," whose favour was sought by the nobleman, the ecclesiastic, the philosopher, the dramatist, by all the brilliant people, but who set them all aside for an ape-like hunchback, with whom she passed many hours, to the wonder of all, until it was discovered that the repulsive creature was instructing her ladyship in cabalistic lore and magic.

There is much human pathos in this longing of mortals to attain to some kind of real and intimate perception beyond the phenomenal universe, and to some personal assurance of a future existence; but it has cost much to the true wisdom of this world. Some realization of this may have caused the sorrow of Jesus at Dalmanutha, as related in Mark. "The Pharisees came forth and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, testing him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why does this people seek a sign? I say plainly unto you no sign will be given them. And he left them, and reëntering the boat departed to the other side."

They who now long to know the real mind of Jesus are often constrained to repeat his deep sigh when they find the most probable utterances ascribed to him perverted by the marvel-mongers, insomuch that to the protest just quoted Matthew adds a self-contradictory sentence about Jonah. That this unqualified repudiation by Jesus of miracles should have been preserved at all in Mark, a gospel full of miracles, is a guarantee of the genuineness of the incident, and of the comparative earliness of some parts of that gospel. The period of sophistication was not far advanced. Miracles require time to grow. But the deep sigh and the words of Jesus, taken in connection with the entire absence from the Epistles—the earliest New Testament documents—of any hint of a miracle wrought by him, is sufficient to bring us into the presence of a man totally different from the "Christ" of the four Gospels.\*

Those who seek the real Jesus will find it the least part of their task to clear away the particular miracles

\* The name Jesus is used in these pages for the man, Christ being used for the supernatural or risen being.

ascribed to him; that is easy enough; the critical and difficult thing is to detach from the anecdotes and language connected with him every admixture derived from the belief in his resurrection. To do this completely is indeed impossible.

Paul, probably a contemporary of Jesus, knew well enough the vast difference between the man "Jesus" and the risen "Christ"; he insisted that the man should be ignored, and supplanted by the risen Christ, as revealed by private revelations received by himself after the resurrection. The student must now reverse that: he must ignore those post-resurrectional revelations if he would know Jesus "after the flesh"—that is, the real Jesus.

In an age when immortality is a familiar religious belief we can hardly realize the agitation, among a people to whom life after death was a vague, imported philosophy, excited by the belief that a man had been raised bodily from the grave. Immortality was no longer hypothesis. If to this belief be added the further conviction that this resurrection was preliminary to his speedy reappearance, and the world's sudden transformation, a mental condition could not fail to arise in which any ethical or philosophical ideas he might have uttered while "in the flesh" must be thrown into the background, as of merely casual or temporary importance. Such is the state of mind reflected in the Pauline Epistles. In them is found no reference whatever to any moral instructions by Jesus. And when after some two generations had passed, and they who had expected while yet living to meet their returning Lord had died, those who had heard oral reports and legends concern-

ing him and his teachings began to write the memoranda on which our Synoptical Gospels are based, it was too late to give these without adulterations from the apostolic ecstasy. His casual or playful remarks were by this time discoloured and distorted, and enormously swollen, as if under a solar microscope, by the overwhelming conceptions of a resurrection, an approaching advent, a subversion of all nationalities and institutions.

The most serious complication arises from the extent to which the pretended revelations of Paul have been built into the Gospels. The so-called "conversion of Paul" was really the conversion of Jesus. The facts can only be gathered from Paul's letters, the book of "Acts" being hardly more historical than "Robinson Crusoe." The account in "Acts" of Paul's "conversion" is, however, of interest as indicating a purpose in its writers to raise Paul into a supernatural authority equivalent to that ascribed to Christ, in order that he might set aside the man Jesus. The story is a travesty of that related in the "Gospel According to the Hebrews," concerning the baptism of Jesus: "And a voice out of the heaven saying, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased': and again, 'I have this day begotten thee.' And straightway a great light shone around the place. And when John saw it he saith to him, 'Who art thou, Lord?' " John fell down before Jesus as did Paul before Christ. "At midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is

hard for thee to kick against the goad.' And I said, 'Who art thou, Lord?' " (Precisely what John said to Jesus at the baptism.)

This story (Acts xxvi. 13-15), quite inconsistent with Paul's letters, is throughout very ingenious. Besides associating Paul with the supernatural consecration of Jesus, it replies, by calling him Saul, to the Ebionite declaration that Paul had been a pagan, who had become a Jewish proselyte with the intention of marrying the High Priest's daughter. There is no reason to suppose that Paul was ever called Saul during his life, and his salutation of two kinsmen in Rome with Latin names, Andronicus and Junias (Romans xvi. 7), renders it probable that he was not entirely if at all Hebrew. The sentence, "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad," is a subtle answer to any who might think it curious that the story of the resurrection carried no conviction to Paul's mind at the time of its occurrence by suggesting that in continuing his persecutions he was going against his real belief—kicking against the goad.

Paul, however, knows nothing of this theatrical conversion in his letters. But in severe competition with other "preëminent apostles," who were preaching "another Christ" from his, he pronounces them accursed, supporting an authority above theirs by declaring that he had repeated interviews with the risen Christ, and on one occasion had been taken up into the third heaven and even into Paradise! The extremes to which Paul was driven by the opposing apostles are illustrated in his intimidation of dissenting converts by his pretence to an occult power of withering up the flesh of those whom he disapproves (I Cor. v. 5). He tells Timothy of two men, Hymenæus and Alexander, whom he thus



“delivered over to Satan” that “they may be taught not to blaspheme”—the blasphemy in this case being the belief (now become orthodoxy) that the dead were not sleeping in their graves but passed into heaven or hell at death. In the book of “Acts” (xiii.) this claim of Paul’s seems to have been developed into the Evil Eye (which he fastened on Bar Jesus, whose eyes thereon went out), and may perhaps account for the similar sinister power ascribed to some of the Popes.

In this story of Bar Jesus, Christ is associated with Paul in striking the learned man blind (xiii. 11), and the development of such a legend reveals the extent to which Jesus had been converted by Paul. In 1 Cor. ii. he presents a Christ whose body and blood, being not precisely discriminated in the sacramental bread and wine, had made some participants sickly and killed others, in addition to the damnation they had eaten and drank. He does not mention that any who communicated correctly had been physically benefited thereby; only the malignant powers appear to have had any utility for Paul.

That this menacing Christ may have been needed to intimidate converts and build up churches is probable; that such a being was nothing like Jesus in the flesh, but had to come by pretended posthumous revelation, as an awful potentate whose human flesh had been but a disguise, is certain. We need not, therefore, be surprised to find that nearly everything pharisaic, cruel, and ungentlemanly, ascribed to Jesus in the synoptical Gospels, is fabricated out of Paul’s Epistles. Paul compares rival apostles to the serpent that beguiled Eve (2 Cor. xi. 3, 4), and Christ calls his opponents offspring of vipers. The fourth Gospel, apostolic in

spirit, degrades Jesus independently, but it also borrows from Paul. Paul personally delivered some over to Satan, and the intimation in John xiii. 27, "after the sop, then entered Satan into Judas," accords well with what Paul says about the unworthy communicant eating and drinking damnation (1 Cor. xi. 29).

The Eucharist itself was probably Paul's own adaptation of a Mithraic rite to Christian purposes. There is no reason to suppose that there was anything sanctimonious in the wine supper which Jesus took with his friends at the time of the Passover, and Paul's testimony concerning the way it had been observed is against any over with you?"\* Had it been other than a pleasant Epiphanius from the Gospel according to the Hebrews show that he desired to draw his friends away from the sacrificial feature of the festival: "Where wilt thou that we prepare for the passover to eat?" . . . "Have I desired with desire to eat this flesh, the passover with you?"† Had it been other than a pleasant wine supper it could not in so short a time have become the jovial festival which Paul describes (1 Cor. xi. 20), nor, in order to reform it, would he have needed the pretence that he had received from Christ the special revelation of details of the Supper which he gives, and which the Gospels have followed. Having substituted

\* About 1832 the Rev. Ralph Waldo Emerson notified his congregation in Boston (Unitarian) that he could no longer administer the "Lord's Supper," and near the same time the Rev. W. J. Fox took the same course at South Place Chapel, London. The Boston congregation clung to the sacrament, and gave up their minister to mankind. The London congregation gave up the sacrament, and there was substituted for it the famous South Place Banquet, which was attended by such men as Leigh Hunt, Mill, Thomas Campbell, Jerrold, and such women as Harriet Martineau, Eliza Flower, Sarah Flower Adams (who wrote "Nearer, My God, To Thee"). The speeches and talk at this banquet were of the highest character, and the festival was no doubt nearer in spirit to the supper of Jesus and his friends than any sacrament.

† Dr. Nicholson's "*The Gospel According to the Hebrews*, p. 60. In all of my references to this Gospel I depend on this learned and very useful work.

a human for an animal sacrifice ("our passover also hath been sacrificed, Christ," 1 Cor. v. 7), he restores precisely that sacrificial feature to which Jesus had objected; and in harmony with this goes on to show that human lives have been sacrificed to the majestic real presence (1 Cor. xi. 30). He had learned, perhaps by "pagan" experiences, what power such a sacrament might put into the priestly hand.\*

It is Paul who first appointed Christ the judge of quick and dead (1 Tim. iv. 1). He describes to the Thessalonians (2 Thes. i.) "the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God," and the "eternal destruction" of these. Hence, "I never knew you" becomes a formula of damnation put into the mouth of Christ. "I know you not" is the brutal reply of the bridegroom to the five virgins, whose lamps were not ready on the moment of his arrival. The picturesque incidents of this parable have caused its representation in pretty pictures, which blind many to its essential heartlessness. It is curious that it should be preserved in a Gospel which contains the words, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." The parable is fabricated out of 1 Thes. v., where Paul warns the converts that the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, that there will be no escape for those who then slumber, that they must not sleep like the rest, but watch, "for God hath appointed *us* not unto wrath."

\* It has always been a condition of missionary propagandism that the new religion must adopt in some form the popular festivals, cherished observances and talismans of the folk. It will be seen by 1 Cor. x. 14-22 that Paul's eucharist was only a competitor with existing eucharists, with their "cup of devils," as he calls it.

The Christian dogma of the unpardonable sin, substituted for the earlier idea of an unrepentable sin, was developed out of Paul's fatalism. He writes, "For this cause God sendeth them a strong delusion that they should believe a lie" (2 Thes. ii). Although this is not connected in any Gospel with the inexpiable sin, we find its spirit animating the Paul-created Christ in Mark iv. 11: "Unto them that are without all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand: lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them." This is imported from Paul (Rom. xi. 7, 8): "That which Israel seeketh for, that he obtained not; but the elect obtained it and the rest were hardened; according as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day."

Whence came this Christ who, in the very chapter where Jesus warns men against hiding their lamp under a bushel, carefully hides his teaching under a parable for the express purpose of preventing some outsiders from being enlightened and obtaining forgiveness?

Jesus could not have said these things unless he plagiarized from Paul by anticipation. Deduct from the Gospels all that has been fabricated out of Paul (I have given only the more salient examples) and there will be found little or nothing morally revolting, nothing heartless. Superstitions abound, but so far as Jesus is concerned they are nearly all benevolent in their spirit.

But even after we have removed from the Gospels the immoralities of Paul and the pharisaisms so profound as to suggest the proselyte, after we have turned

from his Christ to seek Jesus, we have yet to divest him of the sombre vestments of a supernatural being, who could not open his lips or perform any action but in relation to a resurrection and a heavenly office of which he could never have dreamed. Was he

"The faultless monster whom the world ne'er saw"?

Did he never laugh? Did he eat with sinners only to call them to repentance? Did he get the name of wine-bibber for his "salvationism,"—or was it because, like Omar Khayyám, he defied the sanctimonious and the puritanical by gathering with the intellectual, the scholarly, the Solomonic clubs?

To Paul we owe one credible item concerning Jesus, that he was originally wealthy (2 Cor. viii. 9), and as Paul mentioned this to inculcate liberality in contributors, it is not necessary to suppose that he alluded to his heavenly riches. At any rate, the few sayings that may be reasonably ascribed to Jesus are those of an educated gentleman, and strongly suggest his instruction in the college of Hillel, whose spirit remained there after his death, which occurred when Jesus was at least ten years old.

To a pagan who asked Hillel concerning the law, he answered: "That which you like not for yourself do not to thy neighbour, that is the whole law; the rest is but commentary." It will be observed that Hillel humanizes the law laid down in Lev. xix. 18, where the Israelites are to love each his neighbour among "the children of thy people" as himself. Even Paul (Rom. xiii. 8, Gal. v. 14) quotes it for a rule among the believers, while hurling anathema on others. But Jesus is made (Matt. vii. 12) to inflate the rule into the impracticable form of "All things whatsoever ye would that

men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them." By which rule a wealthy Christian would give at least half his property to the first beggar, as he would wish the beggar to do to him were their situations reversed. This might be natural enough in a community hourly expecting the end of the world and their own instalment in palaces whose splendour would be proportioned to their poverty in this world. But when this delusion faded the rule reverted to what Hillel said, and no doubt Jesus also, as we find it in the second verse of "*Didache*," the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. It is a principle laid down by Confucius, Buddha, and all the human "prophets," and one followed by every gentleman, not to do to his neighbour what he would not like if done to himself. But it is removed out of human ethics and strained *ad absurdum* by the second-adventist version put into the mouth of Jesus by Matthew. I have dwelt on this as an illustration of how irrecoverably a man loses his manhood when he is made a God.

Irrecoverably! In the second Clementine Epistle (xii. 2) it is said, "For the Lord himself, having been asked by some one when his kingdom should come, said, When the two shall be one, and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female neither male nor female." Perhaps a humorous way of saying *Never*. Equally remote appears the prospect of recovering the man Jesus from his Christ-sepulchre. Even among rationalists there are probably but few who would not be scandalized by any thorough test such as Jesus is said, in the Nazarene Gospel, to have requested of his disciples after his resurrection, "Take, feel me, and see that I am not a bodiless demon!" Without blood, without passion, he remains without the experiences and

faults that mould best men, as Shakespeare tells us; he so remains in the nerves where no longer in the intellect, insomuch that even many an agnostic would shudder if any heretic, taking his life in his hand, should maintain that Jesus had fallen in love, or was a married man, or had children.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE MYTHOLOGICAL MANTLE OF SOLOMON FALLEN ON JESUS.

It is no part of my aim to prove miracles impossible, nor to consider whether one or another alleged wonder might not be really within the powers of an exceptional man. In the absence of any apostolic allusion to any extraordinary incident in the life of Jesus, and his own declaration (for the evangelists could not have invented a rebuke to their own narratives) that miracles were the vain expectation of a people in distress and degradation, such records have lost their historic character. As Gibbon said in the last century, it requires a miracle of grace to make a believer in miracles, and even among the uncritical that miracle is not frequent. In the New Testament belief in miracle has its natural corollary in a miraculous morality,—a dissolution of earthly ties, a severance from worldly affairs, a non-resistance and passiveness under wrongs, which are in perfect accord with persons moving in an apocalyptic dream, but not with a world awakened from that dream.

But at the root of the unnatural miracles is the natural miracle—the heart of man. We are such stuff as dreams are made on, as the miracle-working poet reminds us; our little life is surrounded with a sleep, a realm of dreams,—visions that give poetic fulfilment to hopes born of hard experience. No biblical miracle in



its literal form is so beautiful and impressive as the history of its origin and development as traced by the student of mythology. The growth, for example, of a simple proverb ascribed to Solomon "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall, but the just shall flourish as a green leaf" into a hymn (Ps. liii.); the association of this Psalm, by its Hebrew caption, with hungry David eating the shewbread of the temple, and the king's slaying the priests who permitted it; the use of this legend by Jesus when his disciples were censured for plucking the corn on the Sabbath (with perhaps some humorous picture of a great king in Heaven angry because hungry men ate a few grains of corn, crumbs from his royal table) pointed with advice that the censors should learn that God desires charity and not sacrifice; the development of this into an early Christian burden against the rich, which took the form of an old Oriental fable,\* to which a Jewish connotation was given by giving the poor man in Paradise the name of Lazarus (i. e. Eleazar, who risked his life to obtain water for famished David, a story that may have been referred to by Jesus along with that of the shewbread); the transformation of this parable into a quasi-historical narrative representing the return of Lazarus from Abraham's bosom, his poverty omitted; the European combination of the parable and the history by creating a St. Lazarus ("one helped by God"), yet appointing him the helper of beggars (*lazzaroni*): these items together represent a continuity of the human spirit through thousands of years, surmounting obstructive superstitions, holding

\* Ormazd entrusted Zoroaster for seven days with omniscience, during which time he saw, besides many other things, "a celebrity with much wealth, whose soul, infamous in the body, was hungry and jaundiced and in hell, . . . and I saw a beggar with no wealth and helpless and his soul was thriving in paradise."—*Bahman Yast. Sacred Books of the East, Vol. V, p. 197.*

still the guiding thread of humanity through long labyrinths of legend.

To fix on any one stage in such an evolution, detach it, affirm it, is to wrest a true scripture to its destruction. Few can really be interested in Abimelech and the shewbread; no one now believes that a rich man must go to hell because he is rich, nor a pauper to Paradise because of his pauperism; and none can intelligently believe the narrative of the resurrection of Lazarus without believing that in Jesus miraculous power was associated with the untruth and vanity ascribed to him in that narrative. But take the legends all together, and in them is visible the supersacred heart of humanity steadily developing through manifold symbols and fables the religion of human helpfulness and happiness. The study of mythology is the study of nature.

The theory already stated (*ante* I), that illegitimacy or irregularity of birth was a sign of authentication for "the God-anointed," finds some corroboration in the claim of the Epistle to the Hebrews that Jesus, like Melchizedek, was without father, mother, or genealogy. His double nature is suggested: "Our Lord sprung out of Judah" (vii. 14), yet (verse 16), as priest, he has arisen "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an indissoluble life." The writer admits that what he writes about Melchizedek is "hard of interpretation," and perhaps it so proved to the genealogist (Matt. i.) who apparently was animated by a desire to make out a carnal-law inheritance of the throne, yet not so legitimate as to exclude divine interference at various stages. In the forty-two generations only five mothers are named,—all associated either with sexual

immorality or some kind of irregularity in their matrimonial relations. Tamar, through whose adultery with her father-in-law, Judah, his almost extinct line was preserved, is already a holy woman in the book of Ruth (iv. 12), and the association there of Ruth's name with this particular one of the many female ancestors of her son, and her mention in Matthew, look as if some editor of Ruth as well as the genealogist desired to cast suspicion on her midnight visit to Boaz. "The Lord gave Tamar conception, and she bore a son"—grandfather of David. It is also doubtful whether Rahab, who comes next to Tamar in Matthew's list, is called a harlot in the book of Joshua: *Zunch* is said to mean "hostess" or "tavern-keeper." But in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in that of James she becomes a glorified harlot. The next female ancestor of Jesus mentioned is "her of Uriah." The name of the woman is not given,—the important fact being apparently that she was somebody's wife. Our translators have supplied no fewer than five words to save this text from signifying that Bathsheba was still Uriah's wife when Solomon was born.

The next ancestress named after the mother of Solomon is the mother of Jesus, Mary, in whom Bathsheba finds transfiguration. The exaltation of the adulterous mother of Solomon has already been referred to (ante II.), and the traditional ascription to her of the authorship of the last chapter of Proverbs. She was also supposed to be the original or model of "the Virtuous Woman" therein portrayed! Now, in that same chapter she is pronounced "blessed," and excelling all the daughters who have done virtuously (Cf. Luke i. 28, 42). In the "Wisdom of Solomon" (ix. 5) a phrase is used by Solomon which is also used by his mother

(Bathsheba) when she conjured from David the decree for his succession,—“thine handmaiden” (1 Kings i.). Solomon says, “For I, thy servant, and son of thy handmaiden,” etc. This was written in a popular work about the time of the birth of Jesus. We find the “blessed” of Proverbs xxxi. 28, and the “handmaiden” of the “Wisdom of Solomon” both in Mary’s *magnificat*: “For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.”

In Ecclesiasticus (xv. 2) we find the enigmatic clause concerning Solomon’s “Sophia,” personified Wisdom: *καὶ ὑπαντήσεται αὐτῷ ὡς μήτηρ, καὶ ὡς γυνὴ παρθενίας προσδέξεται αὐτόν.*

The Vulgate translates: “Et obviabit illi quasi mater honorificata, et quasi mulier a virginitate suscipiet illum.”

Wycliffe translates the Vulgate: “And it as a modir onourid schal meete hym, and as a womman fro virgynyte schal take him.”

The Authorised Version has: “And as a mother shall she meet him, and receive him as a wife married of a virgin.”

In the Variorum Teacher’s Bible the reading “maiden wife” is suggested, and reference is made to Leviticus xxi. 13, “And he shall take a wife in her virginity.” But the Septuagint, which Jesus Ben Sira would follow were he quoting, uses simple words there: *οὗτος γυναικα παρθένον [ἐκ τοῦ γένους αὐτοῦ] λήφεται.*

(The words in crochets are added by the LXX.)

The clause in Ecclus. xv. 2, taken with the chapter it continues, conveys to me an impression of rhapsodical paradox, as when Dante apostrophises Mary: “O Vir-

gin Mother, daughter of thy son!" The Semitic goddess is born, Wisdom, sister of virginal Athena of the Parthenon, yet fulfilling the Solomonic exaltation of the Virtuous Woman, who is also a wife. She is therefore the Virgin Bride.

But whether this interpretation is correct or not, it cannot be doubted that this strange phrase in a household book might easily convey that impression, and that to believers in the resurrection of Jesus the feeling that he must also have entered the world in a supernatural way might naturally have associated Miriam his mother with the virgin bride, Wisdom.

The evolution of Wisdom into the Holy Spirit has been traced (*ante* XII.), and it is sufficient to mention here that in the "Gospel according to the Hebrews," Jesus uses the phrase "My mother the Holy Spirit."

In the "Wisdom of Solomon" the resurrected Solomon says, "I was nursed in swaddling clothes, and that with cares" (vii. 4, cf. Luke ii. 7). This might be said of every babe, but the King, having begun by saying "I myself also am a mortal man," mentions the swaddling clothes as a sign of lowliness; and the impression made by this item in the Birth-legend of Jesus is shown by a passage in the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy. It is said that when the Wise Men came, in obedience to a prophecy of Zoroaster, Mary rewarded their gifts with one of the child's "Swaddling bands," which on their return to their own land withstood the power of fire, in which it was tested.

The infant Jesus receives gifts of the Wise Men, traceable to the gold, silver, and spices brought by the Queen of Sheba (afterwards "Sophia") to Solomon. (Cf. also Psalm lxxii. 8-11.) As Solomon to the

Queen, so Jesus gives proofs of astounding wisdom to the woman of Samaria.

In the "Wisdom of Solomon" the returned king proceeds: "I was a witty child, and had a good spirit. Yea rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled" (viii. 19, 20). In Luke it is said, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom." "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature."

The word "undefiled" was a special title of Wisdom. In the "Wisdom of Solomon" (vii.) the King, having described his birth, "like to all," and his "swaddling clothes," follows this immediately by saying, "I prayed, and understanding was given me; I called, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me." This is the new and the spiritual birth. Among the titles ascribed in the same chapter to Wisdom is "Undefiled," this being emphasized three verses lower by the declaration that being a pure emanation from God "no defiled thing can fall into her." These ideas, so far as Solomon is concerned, are referable to his prayer for wisdom (1 Kings iii. 9) and to Jahveh's adoption of him (Psalm ii. 7). "Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee."

These ideas all reappear at the baptism of Jesus, as related in the "Gospel according to Hebrews":

"Behold the mother of the Lord and his brethren said to him, 'John the Baptist baptizeth for remission of sins: let us go and be baptized by him.' But he said to them, 'Wherein have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him? except perchance this very thing that I have said is ignorance.' And when the people had been baptized Jesus also came and was baptized by John. And as he went up the heavens were opened, and he saw the Holy Spirit in shape of a Dove descending and entering him. And a voice out of heaven, saying, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased'; and

again, 'I have this day begotten thee.' " (Cf. Jahveh's promise concerning Solomon, 1 Chron. xvii. 13, "I will be his father and he shall be my son.")

It is important to recall that this all occurred *before* baptism. The suggestion that he should be baptized for remission of sins, is met by Jesus as a challenge of his sinlessness. It is submitted to the test, and before he enters the water the "Undeiled" (the dove) enters him, and the deity announces him as then and there begotten. When "straightway a great light shone around the place"—ultimately the Star of Bethlehem. John the Baptist is here the shepherd: seeing the light, he asks, "Who art thou, Lord?" The heavenly voice replies, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then John fell down before him and said, "I pray thee, Lord, baptize thou me." But he prevented him, saying, "Let be; for thus it is becoming that all things should be fulfilled." Then follows the baptism, and the account continues:

"And it came to pass, when the Lord had come up from the water, the entire fountain of the Holy Spirit descended and rested upon him and said to him, 'My Son, in all the prophets did I await thee, that thou mightest come and I might rest in thee; for thou art my rest; thou art my first-born Son that reignest forever.' "\*"

The phrase "entire fountain of the Holy Spirit" is Parsi. Anâhita is the Holy Spirit; her influence is always described as a fountain descending on the saints or heroes to whom she gives strength. It will be remembered that in this Gospel the Holy Spirit is also feminine. The use of the words "fountain" and "rest in thee" are interesting in connection with the account of John the Baptizer and Jesus in the fourth gospel,

\* Nicholson's "Gospel According to the Hebrews," pp. 36-43.

which differs so widely from the Synoptical narratives. It is in John (iii.) left doubtful whether Jesus accepted any baptismal rite at all. John was baptizing at a large pool called Ænon-by-Saleim,—probably allegorical, meaning “Fountain of Repose.” Jesus and his friends came there and plunged in (ἐβαπτίζοντο) ., but they seem to have been a distinct party from that of John.

After the supposed resurrection of Jesus everything he did, even taking a bath, became mystical. Jerome says that in his time there was a place called Salumias, and he maintained that it was there that Melchizedek refreshed Abraham. There are various readings of this Saleim in the New Testament, all, no doubt, variants of Solomon, all meaning “rest”; and the fourth Gospel supplies in *Αἰνῶν ἐγγυς Σαλημ* the basis of the legend in the Aramaic Gospel of the “rest” which the Holy Spirit found in her son, on whom her “entire fountain” was poured. And with this legend may also be read the words of “Wisdom of Solomon,” vii. 27, 28: “She (Wisdom) maketh all things new; and in all ages entering into holy souls she maketh them friends of God and prophets. For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with Wisdom.” The representation in this Aramaic Gospel of the Holy Spirit as “entering into” Jesus is especially interesting in connection with the use of the same phrase in “Wisdom of Solomon,”—into whose heart Wisdom was put by God (1 Kings x. 24).

It is only after Wisdom has entered into Jesus that the voice is heard, “This is my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.” This accords with Solomon’s words, “God loveth none but him that dwelleth with Wisdom.” The angelic song at the birth (Luke ii. 14) preserves



the heavenly voice at the baptism concerning "peace." The "peace" is Solomon's own name, associated with the "rest" given to his reign in order that he might build the temple (1 Kings v. 4, Ecclesiasticus xlvii. 13). "My Son," says the spirit from within Jesus, "Thou art my rest."

It is remarkable that the title preëminently belonging to Solomon, "Prince of Peace," and unknown to the Gospels as a title of Jesus, should be traditionally given to one said to have declared that he had come on earth to bring not peace but a sword, and bids his disciples arm themselves. No doubt the religious instinct tells true in this; it is tolerably plain that the warlike words were ascribed to Jesus not because he said them, but to adapt him to the "Word" as described in the "Wisdom of Solomon": "While all things were in quiet silence. . . . thine Almighty Word leaped down from heaven out of thy royal throne as a fierce man of war . . . and brought thine unfeigned commandment as a sharp sword," etc. The fierce metaphor was, as we have seen, caught up and spiritualized in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and passed on to be literalized for the risen Christ, so that the consecration of the sword by the Prince of Peace is writ large in the Christian wars of many centuries.

To the tests and proofs of Solomon's wisdom recorded in 1 Kings iii. and x. many additions were made by rabbinical tradition, mostly derived from Parsi scriptures. The famous Ring of Solomon is the symbol of sovereignty over the part of the earth owned by God given by him to the first man King Yima—"Then I, Ahura Mazda, brought two implements unto him, a golden ring and a poniard inlaid with gold. Behold,

here Yima bears the royal sway!" (Vendidâd, Farg. ii. 5). When Yima pressed the earth with this ring, the genius of the Earth, Aramaiti, responded to his wish and order. The ring represented Yima's "glory" (in Avestan phrase), his divine potency, lost when he yielded to a temptation of the devil, and Solomon also lost his ring with which, as we have seen (*ante* IV.) his "glory" and royal sway passed to the (Persian) devil Asmodeus. This occurred in a trial of wits, Asmodeus propounding hard questions, which Solomon was able to answer until, proudly thinking he could answer by his unaided intellect, he laid aside his ring, at the challenge of Asmodeus. These hard questions are found in an ancient legend of a similar contest between the devil and Zoroaster, and are alluded to as "malignant riddles." Zoroaster met the devil "unshaken by the hardness of his malignant riddles," and swinging "stones as big as a house," which he had obtained from the Maker,—tables of the divine law, and possibly origin of the stones which the devil challenged Jesus to turn into bread.

There are Avestan elements in the legend of the temptation of Jesus that do not appear in the legends of Solomon. In Parsî belief the land of demons on earth is Mâzana. From that region they issue to inflict diseases, especially blindness and deafness. In that region is an "exceeding high mountain," Damâvand, to which the great demon Azi Dahâka was bound by Feridun who overcame him. This demon was called "the murderer,"—the epithet mysteriously applied by Jesus to the devil (John viii. 44). After tempting and supplanting King Yima he ruled over the world for a millennium in great

splendour, and the chief of devils tempts Zoroaster with that glory.

"Renounce the good law of the worshippers of Mazda, and thou shalt gain such a boon as the Murderer gained, the ruler of nations." Thus in answer to him said Zoroaster, "No, never will I renounce the good law of the worshippers of Mazda, though my body, my life, my soul, should burst." Again said the guileful one, the Maker of the evil world, "By whose word wilt thou strike, by whose word wilt thou repel, by whose weapon will the good creatures (strike and repel) my creation?" Thus, in answer, said Zoroaster, "The sacred mortar, the sacred cup, the Haoma [the sacramental juice] the Words taught by Mazda, these are my weapons."\*

After this, Zoroaster "on the mountain" conversed with Ahura Mazda, and invoked the beneficent beings who preside over the seven Karshvares of the earth. We thus have here the mountain, the stones, the Word from the mouth of God, the offer of the kingdoms of the world, and the ministering angels, which reappear in the temptation of Jesus.

After his baptism, Jesus repudiates his human parentage ("who is my mother?" etc.), and was led up by his new mother—the Spirit—into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. To this no doubt relate the words of Jesus preserved by Origen from the "Gospel according to the Hebrews": "Just now my mother the Holy Spirit took me by one of my hairs and bore me up on the great mountain Tabor."\*\* Here the Solomonic

\* *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. iv, p. 206.

\*\* In the apocryphal book, "Bel and the Dragon" (verse 36), the angel thus bore by the hair Habakkuk to Babylon, and set him over the lion's den where Daniel was confined. Habakkuk means the "embrace of love."

kingdom and glory were offered by the devil if Jesus would worship him. According to Luke iv. he was tempted forty days (the number of the years of Solomon's reign). The first incident thereafter was his announcement that the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and the second was an exhibition of his Solomonic power over devils. This, in Luke, is his first miracle. His first titular recognition was this surrender of the devil, who cried, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of Israel!"

In Matthew also the devils first give him the divine title "Son of God" (vii. 29). In the next chapter he gives his twelve disciples authority over demons. That this was well understood by the people is shown in Matthew xii. 23, where, on seeing demons mastered, they cry, "Is this the Son of David?" that is, is this Solomon, the famous enslaver of demons?

It may be noted in passing that in the three miracles in Matthew of exorcising a blinding demon the title "Son of David" is used. Alford speaks of this as remarkable; but vision is the especial promise of Wisdom, therefore of Solomon, son of David.

It may be remembered in this connection that in "Wisdom" (Ecclus. iv.) the trial by Wisdom is set forth:

"Whoso giveth ear unto her shall judge the nations. \* \* \*  
 If a man commit himself unto her, he shall inherit her.  
 \* \* \* At the first she will walk with him by crooked ways  
 and bring fear and dread upon him, and torment him with her  
 discipline, until she may trust his soul, and try him by her  
 laws. Then she will return the straight way unto him, and  
 comfort him, and shew him her secrets. But if he go wrong  
 she will forsake him, and give him over to his own ruin."

This, which reappears in the parable of the broad and the narrow ways, seems to have determined the part which the Holy Spirit performs in the temptation of Jesus. According to Matthew he was by the Spirit carried involuntarily, "driven," says Mark, the Hebrew Gospel says, "borne by the hair" into the wilderness: as Jahveh "raised a Satan unto Solomon," and left Job to Satan, the Holy Spirit carries Jesus to Satan, the same Evil One; and after his triumph the promise in "Wisdom" (she will "comfort him") is fulfilled: "Angels came and ministered unto him." Luke says he "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and a fame went out concerning him through all the region round about: he taught in their synagogues and was glorified of all."

Nevertheless it may be remarked that the peculiar language in Luke (iv. 1) "led in the spirit" suggests that the whole story is a late literalization of some vision, partly based on v. 7 of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but originally on Solomon's dream (1 Kings iii.), in which Jahveh offers him any gift, and he asks only for Wisdom. Or, as he (Solomon) says in "Wisdom of Solomon," "I preferred her before sceptres and thrones" (vii. 8). But all of these were remotely influenced by the trial of Zoroaster, and the attempts of the devil to terrify Zoroaster before tempting him may be hinted in Mark i. 13, "He was with the wild beasts." These, however, are more prominent in the temptation of Buddha.

Paul appears to have considered it an important apostolic credential to have had to contend with a Satan (2 Cor. xii. 7-10), and Peter was honoured by a special

request made by Satan, and conceded, that he should be for a time under his diabolical control. (Luke xxii. 31.)

As in the case of Solomon, the tests and trials of the superhuman wisdom and power of Jesus are found chiefly in tradition and folklore. The apocryphal gospels contain many, and some are preserved by Persian and Arabian poets. In the New Testament a few examples appear in which his utterances are given a quasi-judicial tone. There are several points of resemblance between the famous judgment of Solomon on the two harlots contending for the child, and the sentence of Jesus in favour of "sinful Mary," sister of Martha, accused by Simon the Pharisee. In both cases the decision was made at a feast, and in favour of the one who "loved much." It is not, however, the incident in itself that is now referred to, but only the formality ascribed to it in the narrative. And this adheres to the entire story. The anointing of Jesus may have occurred, but the scenic touches recall lines in the Solomonic "Song of Songs":

"While the King sat at his table,  
My spikenard sent forth its fragrance."

It is not impossible, by the way, that it was from chaste Shulamith of the Song ascribed to Solomon that a bad reputation was fixed on Mary Magdalene, against whose virginal purity no word is said in the Bible, the chapter heading to Luke vii. alone identifying her, in contradiction to John xi. 2, as the woman who anointed Jesus. This libel seems to come from a far antiquity,—as far probably as the Talmudic "Miriam Magdala" (i. e., Braided-hair Mary); and this epithet might have been derived from Shulamith's "ringlets"

which were "tied up in folds," and whose spikenard sent forth its odours while Solomon was at the table. The later Jahvism must have considered such attention by ladies to their hair as an evidence of wickedness. Paul, while recognizing that long hair is a woman's "glory" (1 Cor. xi.) dangerously fascinating even to the angels, testifies against "braided hair" (1 Tim. ii.), an instruction repeated in 1 Peter iii. Whether this lady of means who helped to support Jesus was from Magdala or not, it is nearly certain that her legend was derived from another sense of "Magdalene," and it is not improbable that the friendship of Jesus for her was in keeping with his Solomonic defiance of the Pharisaic.

The Eastern tales of monarchs in disguise, derived from a legend of Solomon, may have prepared the popular mind for the double rôle performed by Jesus in the Gospels, for the earlier writers do not suggest any lowliness in his position beyond the humiliation of taking on human flesh and dying. In the Gospels we find him now an hungered, now dining with the Pharisee and anointed with precious ointment, again multiplying food; an humble son of man who has not where to lay his head, a son of God with legions of angels at his command; purifying the temple with violence, and predicting its destruction; a peacemaker bringing a sword; telling his disciples to resist not evil, and arming them; enjoining secrecy about his miracles, presently parading them; prostrate with anguish in a garden, presently shining with unmasked splendour. Solomon never arrayed himself in any such brilliant raiment as that of the transfiguration, nor was his environment finer than the scenes imaged in some of these parables,—the prodigal's ring and robe, the king

going to war and sending his ambassadors, the masters of fields and vineyards, the momentous wedding dress, the importance of rank and precedence at a feast. In miracles, too, we have the grand wedding at Cana, and the homage of the centurion deferentially rewarded\*

In the Hebrew Gospel Jesus says, "I will that ye be twelve apostles for a testimony to Israel"; with which we may compare the "twelve officers over all Israel" appointed by Solomon (1 Kings iv. 7). In Mark the first bestowal on Jesus of his Solomonic title "Son of David" (x.) is immediately followed by his Solomonic entry into Jerusalem. In Matthew the blind man's tribute is followed by the cry of multitudes, "Hosanna to the Son of David"; and the whole scene is obviously from the narrative in 1 Kings i. of the procession of Solomon, seated on David's mule, on the occasion of the anointing which made him the model Messiah, in virtue of which he was King and Priest in combination. Solomon dedicated the temple himself, as High Priest, and to him, as King-Priest, the privilege of sanctuary was subordinate. Wherefore he had an offender executed while holding the horns of the altar. The titular Son of David, on the morrow of his triumphal entry, assumes authority in the temple, and scourges out of it the sellers of things used in the sacrifices,—especially Doves. These his human mother had sacrificed after his birth for purification, but by this time they symbolized his divine mother, the Holy Spirit, and were not to be sold.

Who can suppose that this violence, which were as if one assaulted those who sell holy candles and pictures in

\* I observed in the play at Oberammergau that while the disciples were barefoot, Jesus wore fine white silk stockings, and was otherwise in richer costume.



a church vestibule, really occurred? At Oberammergau the whole tragedy of the Passion Play hinges on the resentment of these merchants, who appeal to the Sanhedrim for protection from the violence of one man armed with a whip! The story (John ii.) is an epitaph of the primitive Christ, the value of whose blood was its proof that his victory over the Adversary was that of a Man, unaided by a divine, unblemished by a carnal, weapon: triumph by either would have been defeat.

The bread and wine offered to Abraham by the mythical king-priest of Salem (Solomon disguised as Melchizedek) may have been suggested by the bread and wine offered by Wisdom to her guests, in Proverbs ix. However this may be, there is clearly discoverable at the Last Supper of Jesus the Satan that Jahveh raised up against Solomon in the presence of mythical Judas ("Satan entered into him," says John), and in the whole scene the table of Wisdom. "She hath mingled her wine, she hath furnished her table," and cries—

"Come, eat ye of my bread,  
And drink of the wine which I have mingled."

That Jesus supped with his disciples, at the Passover time, is very probable, but that the bread and wine alone should have been selected for symbolical usage (a point unknown to the fourth gospel) conforms too closely with the Solomonic prologue to be a mere coincidence. The words "Take, eat," "Drink ye all of it," recall also the Song of Songs—

Eat, O friends!  
Drink, yea abundantly, O beloved!

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE HEIR OF SOLOMON'S GODHEAD.

The anger of Jahveh against Solomon (1 Kings xi.) is, of course, the outcome of late theological explanations of how the ancient and much idealised kingdom could have been divided after divine promises of its protection. The interview with Solomon is a sort of dramatization, in which the anachronism of making Jahveh a historic contemporary of the Wise King represents the fact that when the tribal deity was evolved it was in antagonism to a Solomon who, though his body had long mouldered, was still "marching on." That Solomon had to contend with the hard and fanatical elements afterwards consolidated in Jahvism is pretty clear, and we may see in him a primitive Akbar. A century after Akbar's death the Rajah of Joudpoor said to the emperor Aurungzebe: "Your ancestor Akbar, whose throne is now in heaven, conducted the affairs of his empire in equity and security for the period of fifty years. He preserved every tribe of men in repose and happiness, whether they were followers of Jesus or of Moses, of Brahma or Mohammed. Of whatever sect or creed they might be, they all equally enjoyed his countenance and favour, insomuch that his people, in gratitude for the indiscriminate protection which he afforded them, distinguished him by the appellation of The Guardian of Mankind." Moslem fanaticism could not tolerate such toleration, and Akbar's reign

was followed by conflicts very similar to those which followed Solomon's reign, leading to the Mogul empire, but ultimately to the reign of an "Empress of India," under whom we now see the same toleration of all religions which prevailed in the fifty years of Akbar.

The Moslem saw in Akbar's liberality and toleration the supreme offence of putting other gods—Jesus, Brahma, Ahuramazda—beside Allah. The Jahvist saw retrospectively in Solomon's liberality the putting of Moloch, Ashera, and other gods beside Jahveh. It was therefore recorded that Jahveh determined to rend all the tribes save one from Solomon's son (a *raticinium ex evento*). But that one was enough to preserve the Solomon cult.

*Ἀνάγκη οὐδὲ θεοὶ μάχονται.* This Necessity, which the Greeks saw working above all the gods, is man himself, and worked also above Jah and Jahvism, nay, by means of them. Gradually they seemed to prevail over Solomonism. The Proverbs and Solomonic Psalms were transfused with Jahvism, but by this process the heavenly and the terrestrial kings were confused, and the idea of a human heir to the throne of Jahveh was conceived. As when, in our own era, Islam swallowed Zoroaster, with the result of bringing forth the great literary age of Persia, with Parsaism rationalized under a transparent veil of Moslem phrase and fable, so anciently arose the Hebrew Faizis and Saadis and Omar Khayyáms. Of these was the Isaiah who, with pigments of the Solomonic sunset, painted the sunrise of a new day, and a new earth-born God.

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall rest on his shoulder: and his name shall be called Counsellor of Wonders, God-hero, Father of Spoil,

Prince of Peace. Enlarged shall be dominion, and without cessation of peace, on the throne of David, and throughout his kingdom, to establish it and uphold it by justice and righteousness from henceforth and forever."

Every title, every tint, in this gorgeous vision is taken from the nuptial song for Solomon (Ps. xlv.) and Solomon's Psalm (lxxii.) The "delightsomeness poured over (Solomon's) lips" (Ps. xlv. 2) makes the Counsellor of Wonders; his deification (verses 6, 7) makes the God-hero; the tributes of Tarshish, and Sheba make him father of spoil (Ps. lxxii.); his "mildness" (Ps. xlv. 4) his abundant "peace" (Ps. lxxii. 3, 7) make the Prince of Peace; and the rest is a general refrain for both of the Psalms.

Psalm xlv. opens with the words, "My verse concerns the King," and there is a fair consensus of the learned that the king is Solomon. It has been found impossible to fix upon any other monarch to whom the eulogia would be applicable, and the resemblance of the theme to the Song of Solomon proves that at an early period writers connected the Psalm with Solomon and one of his espousals.

In quoting Professor Newman's translation of this Psalm (*ante* II) I alluded to my slight alterations. These are few and verbal, but momentous, and were not made without consultation of many critical authorities and versions. Professor Newman was unable to believe that the poet really meant to address Solomon as God, and in verse 6 translates "Thy throne divine," in verse 7, "Therefore hath God, thy God, etc." Others, with similar theistic bias, have shrunk from what, according to the balance of critical interpretation, is the clear sense of the original:

“Thy throne, O God, ever and always stands;  
A righteous sceptre is thy royal sceptre:  
Thou lovest right and hatest evil;  
Therefore, O God, hath thy God anointed thee  
With oil of joy above thy fellow-kings.”

When these verses were written—and verse 11, where after Adonai the Vulgate has Elohim, “He is thy Lord God, worship thou him”—the rigid Jewish monotheism did not exist; and the apostrophe might have continued without special notice had not the psalm been included in the Jewish hymnology and thus given the solemnity and consecration ascribed by Jahvism to its canonical Book of Psalms. But ultimately it made a tremendous and even revolutionary impression; and that the verses were interpreted as bestowing the divine name on Solomon, by those most jealous of that name, is proved, I think, by the following considerations:

1. Isaiah, in his vision quoted above (Is. ix.) combines the phraseology of Ps. xlv. with that of Ps. lxxii. (which bears Solomon’s name as its author), and ascribes to a new-born child the title “God-hero.”

2. The recently discovered original of a fragment of Ecclesiasticus includes the passage about Solomon in xlvii., and it is said in verse 18: “Thou (Solomon) wast called by the glorious name which is called over Israel.” This seems to be a plain reference to the ascriptions in Ps. xlv., where alone the divine name is applied to any individual mortal. Ecclesiasticus was compiled early in the second century before our era, and on the basis of much earlier compilations, as its prologue states.

3. In the “Wisdom of Solomon” the monarch is represented as a mortal who by the divine gift of supernatural Wisdom had gained immortality; he had be-

come privy to the mysteries of God, was his Beloved, his Son. This was written about the first year of our era.

4. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews translates the Psalm xlv. as it is translated above, interpreting the words of deification as meant for the Firstborn of God at his ancient appearance on earth (i. 6), and applicable to his reappearance as Christ; arguing from such language of deification the superiority of the Son of God over the angels, who were never so addressed.

A court poet addresses a princely bridegroom as *Elohim*, as a god—as it were, an Apollo. Had more songs of like antiquity by poets of his race been preserved, no doubt other instances of such rhapsody might be found, but it happens that this is the only instance in Hebrew literature where an individual man is clearly addressed as God (for Exod. vii. 1 and 1 Sam. xxviii. 13 are not really exceptions). As in the Psalm that is the only instance in which an individual man is, in the Old Testament, addressed as God, so is its application in the Epistle to the Hebrews the only indisputable instance in which an individual is addressed as God in the New Testament.

“Thy throne, O God.” Fateful words! The word of God, says this Epistle, is sharper than any two-edged sword, but its writer himself unwittingly unsheathed from a courtier’s compliment just such a sword. One edge has slaughtered innumerable Jews, Moslems, Arians, Socinians, mingling their blood with that of the humane Jesus himself on the sacrificial altar he tried so hard to exchange for mercifulness. The other edge turned against the moral heart of Jesus himself, lowering the tone of all narratives and utterances ascribed

to him after his connection with Jahveh, and consequently lowering all Christendom under its dishonourable burden of accommodating human veracity and kindness to the bad heavenly manners that were acquired by the deified Christ. For there was no other God to adopt him but a particularly rude one.

Theological scholars who have compared the Epistle to the Hebrews with the Epistles of Paul have dwelt on the theological differences, but the moral differences are greater. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the emphasis is laid on the service of Jesus to mankind: it is this that makes him, as it made Solomon, worthy of worship as a God, and the ancient God with his sacrifices is virtually represented as transforming himself and his government to the measure of Jesus. Jesus is complete and perfect man, no part or power of his divine nature accompanying him on earth. But we see in Philippians ii. 7, and other passages, the primitive idea fading away, and Jesus pictured as a divine being in the mere semblance and disguise of a man, no real man at all; a theory which prevails in the story of the transfiguration, where the disguise is for a moment thrown aside. The earlier idea of his genuine humanity was still strong enough to prevent any stories of miracles wrought by Jesus from arising, the resurrection being a miracle wrought by God after the work of Jesus was "finished," as he is said to have proclaimed from the stake. But legends of miracles became inevitable after the theory of his disguise was diffused, and also stories of the vituperation, anathemas, and attitudinizing, which are so offensive in a man, but so characteristic of the whole history of Jahveh, with whom he was gradually identified. A gentleman does

not call his opponents vipers and consign them to hell, but Jahveh is not under any such obligations. And, alas, disregard of the humanities did not, as we have seen, stop there even in Paul's time. In the further development, that of Jesus the magician, the personal character of Jesus was sadly sacrificed, and it is only due to the superstition that prevents the New Testament narratives from being read in a common sense way that people generally are not shocked by some of the representations.

When the second Solomon was born in Bethlehem, as the Gospel carols tell, Wise Men came to worship him, but Jahveh had already fixed his own star above the cradle, and his angels contended for the great man, as for centuries the wisdom of the first Solomon had been jahvized. It was, however, the opinion of some ancient commentators that the cry of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest" meant that the birth of Jesus was to operate in the heavenly heights, and work changes there also. One may indeed dream of a deity longing for a human love,—grieving at being through ages an object of fear, personified as Wrath,—rejoicing in the birth of any new interpreter who should free him from the despot glory, "I create evil," and reconcile the human heart to him as eternal love—love ever burdened with the griefs of humanity, ever seeking to be born of woman, and to struggle against the dark and evil forces of nature. So one may dream, and it is a pathetic fact that the contention between humanity and heaven for the new-born Saviour is traceable in varying versions of the Angels' song. While half of Christendom sing "On earth peace, good will toward men," the other half sing, "On earth peace to men of good



will." Our Revisers find the balance of authorities on the side of authority, and translate

Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

Although the "higher criticism" appears to treat with a certain contempt the birth-legends and carols in Matthew and Luke, and the genealogies, beyond the letter of these is visible more of the vanishing Jesus "after the flesh," the real and great man, than of the risen Christ in whom his humanity was lost. The "shepherd of my people," he who is to absolve them from their nightmare "sins," make crooked ways straight, rough places smooth, and free them from fear, is remembered in these rhapsodies of the Infancy, in the terrors of Herod, and gifts of the Wise. They have a certain evolution in the benevolent teachings and healing miracles of the Synoptics, easily discriminated from the competing Jahveh-Christ. (Think of a teacher urging his friends to forgive offenders seventy times seven and then promising them a "Comforter" who will never forgive the slightest offence, though merely verbal, either in this world or in the next!)

The extent to which the man was lowered and lost in the risen Lord is especially revealed in the fourth Gospel. Except for the story of the woman taken in adultery, admittedly interpolated from another Gospel, the fourth Gospel may be regarded as perhaps the only book in the Bible without recognition of humanity. "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me," is the keynote. In this work there is no text for the reformer and the philanthropist, unless perhaps the retreat of Jesus from a prospect of being made king. What inferences of benevolence might be

made even from the miracles related have to be strained through the arrogance, self-aggrandizement, attitudinizing, as of a showman, with which they are wrought.\* A rudeness to his mother precedes the turning of water to wine (ii. 4); the nobleman's son is healed because the aristocrat will not believe without a miracle (iv. 48); the infirm man at Bethesda is healed only after a sham question, "Wouldest thou be made whole?" and threatened afterwards (v. 6, 14); feeding the multitude is attended with another sham question (vi. 5), and a parade of the fragments (13); the man born blind is declared to have been so born solely for the sign and wonder manifested in his cure (ix. 3).

But the supremacy of a new Jahveh over all moral obligations and all truthfulness is especially displayed in the resurrection of Lazarus (xi.). Here Jesus is represented as staying away from the sick man, in order that he may die; he affects to believe Lazarus is only asleep, but finding his disciples pleased with the prospect of recovery, in which case there would be no miracle, he becomes frank (*παρήγγισα*) and assures them Lazarus is dead; he tells his disciples privately he is glad Lazarus is dead; he tells Martha, when she comes out to him *alone*, that her brother shall rise; but when her sister Mary comes out, accompanied by her Jewish consolors, Jesus breaks out into vehement groans and lamentations, lashing himself (*ἐτάρραξεν ἑαυτὸν*) into this sham grief over a man at whose death he has connived and who would presently be alive! Even in his prayer over Lazarus the pretence is kept up, and

\*On a very ancient sarcophagus in the Museo Gregoriano, Rome, is represented in bas-relief the raising of Lazarus. Christ appears beardless and equipped with a wand in the received guise of a necromancer, while the corpse of Lazarus is swathed in bandages exactly as an Egyptian mummy.—King's *Gnostics*, p. 145.

his Father is informed, in an aside, "I know that thou hearest me always, but because of the multitude around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me." Thus does the fourth Gospel sink Jesus morally into the grave of Lazarus, leaving in his place an embodiment of the Jahveh who had lying spirits to send out into his prophets on occasion.

The resurrection of Lazarus is a transparent fabrication out of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Abraham's words to the rich man,—“neither will they be persuaded if one rose from the dead,”—were not adapted to a faith built on a resurrection, so that parable is suppressed in the fourth Gospel. The resurrection of a supernatural man is not quite sufficient for people not supernatural. Those who had been looking for a returning Christ had died, just like the unbelievers. There was a tremendous necessity for an example of the resurrection of an ordinary man. Shocking as are the immoral details of the story, there is audible in it the pathetic cry of the suffering human heart, and the demand that must be met by any Gospel claiming the faith of humanity. “Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died!” Through what ages has that declaration, not to be denied, ascended to cold and cruel skies? It is found in the Vedas, in Job, in the Psalms. If there is a Heart up there why are we tortured? To the many apologies and explanations and pretences which imperilled systems had given, Christianity had to support itself by something more than Egyptian dreams and Platonic speculations. A dead man must arise; it must be done dramatically, amid domestic grief and neighbourly sympathy; it must be done doctrinally, with funeral sermon turned to rejoic-

ings. And this was all done in the story of Lazarus in such a way that it might surround every grave with illusions for centuries. For who, while tears are falling, will pause to handle the wreaths, and find whether they are genuine? Who, while the service is proceeding, will analyze the details, and ask whether it is possible that the good Jesus could have practiced such deception and assumed such theatrical attitudes?\*

The indifference of the fourth Gospel to such moral considerations as those found in the Synoptics is so apostolic that I am inclined to place much of it nearer to the first century than I once supposed. Paul's rage against the "wisdom of this world," and his fulminations against the learned because they are not "called," are fully adopted by the Johannine Christ, who says to the blind man whose eyes he had opened, and who was worshipping him: "For judgment came I into this world, that they that see not may see, and they that see may become blind." And these ideas are represented in a legend related in the book of Acts which is really allegorical, though our translators have manipulated it into serious history.

A persecutor of Christians, on whom the spirit "came mightily," as on King Saul, so that he was a new "Saul among the prophets," sought to convert to his new faith a Roman Proconsul, Sergius Paul. But with this Consul was a learned man of the Jewish Wisdom School, Bar-Jesus Elymas,—i. e., Dr. Anti-Jesus Wise Man. Like Michael and Satan contending for the body

\* Renan suggested that Jesus and his friends at Bethany arranged a pretended death and resurrection of Lazarus. This seems inconsistent with the absence of any allusion to it or to Lazarus in the Epistles, and also with the evident relation of the narrative to the parable. It looks more as if the parable of Lazarus and the rich man had been dramatized and the return of Lazarus from "Abraham's bosom" added. At every step in the narrative (John xi.) there is a suggestion of some old "mystery-play" fossilized into prosaic literalism.

of Moses, Prophet Saul and Anti-Jesus Wise Man contended for the Roman Paul's soul. Prophet Saul prevailed by calling Anti-Jesus Wise Man a child of the devil, and striking him blind. Thereupon Consul Paul believed, being "astonished at the teaching of the Lord." Whereupon Prophet Saul triumphantly carries off the Roman's name as a trophy.\*

Beginning in this conclusive way, by striking human Wisdom sightless ("that they that see may become blind," John ix. 39), the Anti-Wisdom propaganda, which began with identifying Wisdom with the serpent in Eden, passed on to inspire the Church Fathers who gloated over the eternal tortures of the poets and philosophers of Greece and Rome. Alas for the philosophers not in their graves, but in their cradles, or in the womb of the future! For torments are nearest "eternal" when they begin at once on earth.

One may readily understand how it was that personal traditions of Jesus and his teachings remained unwritten until his contemporaries were dead (although this may not have been the case with the suppressed "Gospel according to the Hebrews"); the hourly expected return of Christ rendered such memoirs unimportant until it became clear that the expectation was erroneous. The age of John, of whom Jesus was rumoured to have predicted survival till his return

\* This is the genuine sense of the story in Acts xiii. There is no evidence in Paul's writings that he ever bore the name of Saul. Bar-Jesus has a double meaning,—“Son of Jesus” and “Obstruction of Jesus.” The antithesis may have been suggested by the words of Pilate, in many ancient versions of Matt. xxvii. 16, 17: “Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? Jesus Bar Abbas, or Jesus that is called the Christ?” Elymas, commonly used as a proper name, means Wise Man. The word *μάγοι* denotes Wise Men in Matt. ii. 1, where they bring gifts to the infant Christ, but the same word is made by translators to denote a “sorcerer” when the wise man is opposing Paul! Nobody named Sergius Paulus was known before the Consul of AD. 94, who must have been long enough dead for this legend to form before it was written.

(John xxi. 22), was stretched out to a mythical extent; he became an undying sleeper at Ephesus, and finally a pious "Wandering Jew"; but when at length such fables lost their strength, some imaginative impersonator brought forth an apocalyptic bequest of John postponing the second advent a thousand years. The conventicles had thus no resource but to turn into orthodoxy the heresy of Hymenæus and Alexander, for which Paul delivered them over to Satan, that the resurrection occurs at death; to collect the traditional sayings of Jesus; and to adapt these to the new situation. A thousand years later, when the expected catastrophe did not occur, the substantial churches and cathedrals were built, as the Gospels had been built after the first-century disappointment.

These Gospels contain things from which some of the real teachings of the wise man of Nazareth may be fairly conjectured. That the synoptical records are palimpsests, though denied by the prudent, is a truth felt by the unsophisticated who, in their use of such words as "Christian" and "a Christian spirit," quite ignore the fearful anathemas and damnatory language ascribed to Jesus.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE LAST SOLOMON.

Every race has a pride in its great men which ultimately prevails over any pious taboo imposed on them in life or by tradition. Some years ago it was announced that a German scholar was about to publish proofs that Jesus was not of the Hebrew race, and while Christendom showed little concern, all Israel sat upon that German almost furiously. It is an old story. Banished Buddha becomes an avatar of Vishnu, and his image now appears in India beside Jagenath. For the heresiarch must be adapted before adoption. So Solomon returns as a preacher of orthodox Jahvism, in the "Wisdom of Solomon," but so rigid had been the taboo in his case that the writer did not venture to insert the name of so famous a liberal and secularist.

That was about the first year of our era. But presently we hear about the "Son of David." Was that because of David himself? Interest in David had so receded that in the "Wisdom of Solomon" the resuscitated Wise Man barely alludes (once) to his "father's seat." Was it because of any popular interest in the legendary throne or house of David? That old "covenant" is not alluded to by the resuscitated monarch, and in the apostolic writings nothing is said about it. In the Gospels the title "Son of David" is generally connected with certain alleged miracles of Jesus, which recalled legends of Solomon, and it is only in the ac-

count of the entry into Jerusalem that it carries any connotation of royalty corresponding to the genealogies afterwards elaborated. Unless these narratives are accepted as historical they must be regarded as phenomena, and, taken in connection with what may be reasonably regarded as genuine teachings of Jesus, the phenomena point to a probability that he had reawakened interest in the Wise Man's teachings, and that this interest, by a compromise with Jahvist prejudices, coined the expression "Son of David" as an *alias* of Solomon.

However this may be, it appears certain that there was in the teachings of Jesus some substantial recovery of the ancient and unconverted Solomon, the proverbial philosopher, the man of the world. How much Jesus may have said to revive interest in Solomon, and how many of his secular utterances have been hidden in the grave of his humanity, can only be conjectured; but there are two direct sayings concerning Solomon ascribed to him which may be regarded as the only unreserved tributes to the Wise Man that had ever been uttered since his idealization in Chronicles. And our own Protestant Jahvism has tried so hard to manipulate these tributes into partial disparagements that we may easily imagine early Christian Jahvism destroying similar testimonies altogether.

A. S. V. Luke xi. 31: "The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here."

True rendering: "The Queen of the South shall stand in the judgment with the men of this [Abra-



hamic] brood, and condemn them; for she came from the farthest parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold something more than Solomon is here." (*πλεῖτον Σολομῶνος ὧδε*)

The word mistranslated "greater," *πλεῖτον*, is neuter and cannot be applied to a man. Jesus is not speaking of himself, but of the new Spirit animating a whole movement.

The word "generation" as a translation of *γενεα* is, in this connection, misleading. No one English word can convey the satire on people who regarded themselves as holy by generation from Abraham (cf. Luke iii. 8), which is in the vein of Carlyle's ridicule of English "Paper Nobility." Above these self-satisfied claimants of inherited wisdom Jesus sets the Gentile Queen journeying to sit at the feet of Solomon. At the feet of Solomon Jesus also was sitting, and he certainly did not call himself personally greater than Solomon.

The other allusion to Solomon (Matt. vi. 28, 29) is rendered thus: "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Here "glory," which when applied to a man has a connotation of pride and pomp, is made to translate *δόξῃ*, which means honour in its best sense, as preserved in "doxology." Jesus really says, "Solomon amid all his honours never arrayed himself (*περιεβίβλετο*) like one of these." The greatest and wisest of men did not affect display in dress.\*

\* "Boast not of thy clothing and raiment, and exalt not thyself in the day of honor: for the works of the Lord (*in nature*) are wonderful, and his works among (*πᾶσι*) men are hidden."—Eccles. xi. 4; cf., in same, xvi. 26-27, where it is said the beautiful things in nature "neither labor, nor are weary; nor cease from their works."

The apparent slightness of these English changes reveals their deliberate subtlety. Puritanism, taking its cue from King James's translators, has bettered the instruction, and steadily pictured Jesus pointing to a lily,—white emblem of purity,—and censuring (implicitly) the ostentation of Solomon. Even in rationalistic hymn-books is found the pretty hymn of Agnes Strickland, beginning:

“Fair lilies of Jerusalem,  
 Ye wear the same array  
 As when imperial Judah's stem  
 Maintained its regal sway:  
 By sacred Jordan's desert tide  
 As bright ye blossom on  
 As when your simple charms outvied  
 The pride of Solomon.”

Very sweet! But the “lilies of the field” in Palestine are not “fair,” their charms are not “simple”; they are large and gorgeous combinations of red and gold; and Solomon, so far from being proud in the contrast, “outvied” in simplicity the pride of the lily.

Jesus may not indeed have said these things concerning Solomon, but the probability that he did say something of the kind is suggested by the adroit mistranslations. The same puritanical spirit, the same prejudice against human wisdom and love of beauty, prevailed even more when the Gospels were written. The Jahvist jealousy of the wisdom of the world which in a Targum added to Jeremiah ix. 23 a fling at Solomon,—“Let not *Solomon the Son of David*, the Wise Man, glory in his Wisdom,”—screamed on in Christian anathemas on science, and laudations of the silly. (For “silly” is of pious derivation, from German *selig*—blessed.) Solomon had not been named in any canon-

ical scripture for centuries, and even in apocryphal "Wisdom" (Ecclesiasticus) he appears as if a brilliant but fallen Lucifer. The cult of Solomon continued no doubt, in a sense, among the Sadducees (respectfully treated, by the way, by Jesus), but they were comparatively few, and like the rationalists of the English Church, cautious about outside heresies. It was probably characteristic that their name is derived from Solomon's priest, Zadok, instead of from Solomon himself. As for the Gentile Queen, she is not named in the Bible after the record of her visit to Solomon until the homage of Jesus was given her. It appears, therefore, very unlikely that such homage and the unqualified tributes to Solomon, would have been put into the mouth of Jesus.

But why, it may be asked, were not these tributes suppressed? There is in one case a recognition of a Gentile lady which would recommend the text to the writer of Luke, and in the other a lesson against luxury which would recommend this to all believers. At any rate, whatever may have been the suppressions, and no doubt there were many, two of the Gospels have preserved these sentences, which, so far as the glorious "idolator" is concerned, neither of them would have invented. There are the words; somebody uttered them; and the question arises, who was that daring man who broke the severe silence or reservations of centuries and did honour to the king who built shrines to gods and goddesses?\*

\* Ewald compares the omission of the name of Moses for so many centuries with the omission of Solomon's name. (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, Bk. ii.). Such omissions do not, he says, cast doubt on the historic character of either. The descriptive references to Solomon during the time when his name is suppressed are more continuous, and more historical. The utterance of Solomon's name was probably at first avoided through Jahvist horror of his supposed idolatry and worldliness, but as he was addressed in

As Solomon said, "A man is proved by what he praises." That Jesus did appreciate the greatness of the Solomonic literature is not a matter of conjecture. The sayings ascribed to him in the Gospels—apart from Pauline importations and quotations from Jahvist scriptures—are largely pervaded by the spirit and even by the phraseology of the Solomonic books. Remembering that the phrases "kingdom of heaven," "kingdom of God," are post-resurrectional, and that Jesus could not, unless by miraculous foresight, use those phrases for any external dominion connected with himself, there is reason to believe that his conception was of a *sway* of Wisdom, and that Wisdom was to him the Saviour, as to Jesus Ben Sira, her realm "within," her leaven hid in the world, her advance without observation.

Of course those who read the Bible in the light of a supernatural theory, see these things very differently, but considering the records as if they were those of uninspired people, one may say that some of the sayings ascribed to Jesus are, in their present form, meaningless. For example, what should we think if we found an ancient record of some poor Egyptian reported as saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." How incongruous the "I am meek" with "learn of me"! How could he give the heavy laden rest? And what rest? what yoke? But we would surely feel enlightened should we presently discover an Egyptian book of "Wis-

a psalm as "God," and as superstitions about his demon-commanding power grew, it seems not improbable that there was some fear of using his name, akin to the fear of uttering the proper name of God or of any evil power.

dom," with proof of its popularity when the mysterious words were orally repeated, containing such language as this from personified Wisdom: "Come unto me, all ye that be desirous of me, and fill yourselves with my fruits." And if we found in the same book a teacher saying: "I directed my soul unto Wisdom, and I found her in pureness. . . Draw near unto me, ye unlearned, and dwell in the house of Wisdom. . . Buy her for yourselves without money. Put your neck under her yoke, and let your life receive instruction: she is near at hand to find. Behold with your eyes that I have had but little labour, and have gotten unto me much rest."

Here is sense. These are the words of Wisdom in Jesus Ben Sira (*Ecclesiasticus* xxiv. 19, li. 23-27). Can any unbiased mind fail to recognize in Matthew xi. 28-30 a mangled quotation from this Hebrew book of the second century, before Jesus of Nazareth was born, but in his time cherished in many Jewish households as much as any Gospel is cherished in Christian households?

Consider the Sermon on the Mount. In the Proverbs ascribed to Solomon is found the beatitude pronounced by Jesus on the lowly, no doubt literally quoted by him: "With the lowly is wisdom" (*Prov.* xi. 2). The blessing of those who hunger for righteousness (justice) is in *Prov.* x. 24, where it is said their desire shall be granted. The blessing of the peacemakers is joy (*Prov.* xii. 20). The merciful man doeth good to his own life (*Prov.* xi. 17). The pure in heart shall have the King for his friend (*Prov.* xxii. 11). The house that stands and the house overthrown (*Prov.* x. 25; xii. 7; xiv. 11); the two ways (*Prov.* xii. 28, xiv.

12, xvi. 17); the tree known by its fruits (Prov. xi. 30, xii. 12); give and it shall be given you (Prov. xxii. 9); the sower (Prov. xi. 18, 24, 25); taking the lower place so as to be placed higher and not moved down (Prov. xxv. 6-8); searching for and buying Wisdom as the precious silver, the pearl, the treasure (Prov. vi. 11, 12, 17, 19, 35; xx. 15; xxiii. 23); the prodigal (Prov. xxix. 3); those who wrong parents (Prov. xx. 20; xxviii. 24; cf. Matt. xv. 5; Mark vii. 11). The lamps of the wise and foolish virgins are found in Prov. xiii. 9; also xxiv. 20.

In Proverbs xx. 9, we have the words, "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean, I am pure from sin?'" In Ecclesiastes iii. 16, it is said, "Moreover, I saw under the sun, in the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and in the place of righteousness that wickedness was there." (Cf. also vii. 20.) In the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" Jesus, declaring that an offender should be forgiven seventy times seven, adds: "For in the prophets likewise, after they were anointed by the Holy Spirit, utterance of sin was found."

Although in the language ascribed to Jesus in the fourth Gospel (iii. 1-10) there are post-resurrectional phrases, whatever he may have said about birth and about the wind-like spirit seems to have been what he expected Nicodemus, as a teacher in Israel, to understand. We may therefore suppose that it was substantially a quotation from Ecclesiastes xi. 5: "As thou knowest not the way of the wind, nor the growth of the bones in the mother's womb, even so thou canst not fathom the work of God, who compasseth all things."

In relation to Woman Jesus seems to have appealed

to Solomon against Ecclesiastes, where (vii. 25-29) it is said :

I have turned my heart to know,  
And to explore, and search out wisdom and the reason of  
*things;*

And to know that wickedness is Folly, and Folly madness :  
And I have found what is more bitter than death—  
The Woman who is a snare, her heart nets, her hands chains :  
He who pleases God shall be delivered from her,  
But the offender shall be captured by her.

See, this have I found (saith the Speaker).  
*Adding* one to another, to find out the account,  
Which I am still searching after, but have not found—  
One man in a thousand I have found,  
But a woman among all these I have not found.  
Look you, only this have I found—  
That God made man upright,  
But they have sought out many devices.

In the first seven lines of this passage we may recognize the personification in Proverbs ix. 13-18. The Woman of the fifth line is "Dame Folly"; but the last eight lines relate to womankind. The assurance in the eighth line that it is Koheleth who speaks raises a suspicion that the last eight lines are commentary,—a suspicion further confirmed by the awkwardness of the writing. Strictly read, it is left uncertain whether no woman is ever captured by Dame Folly, or not one escapes. However, as commentators are generally men, the interpretation has been adverse to woman.

But Jesus, perhaps remembering that Wisdom is as much a woman as Folly, is reported (Matthew xi. 19) to have said: "Wisdom is justified by her works." In Luke vii. 35 it is, "Wisdom is justified of all her children." Both of these readings appeal to the Solomonic

portrait of the virtuous woman, in Proverbs xxxi. the last line of which says, "Let her works praise her," and verse 28, "her children rise up and call her blessed."

In Luke the sentence is a verse by itself, and the word "all" renders it probable that the sentiment has a bearing on the story that follows of the anointing of Jesus by a sinful woman.\* Some such incident may have occurred, but the address to Simon the Pharisee making him to be the offender, and the woman one delivered from Dame Folly by her faith ("pleasing God") looks like a criticism on the "fling" at woman in Ecclesiastes, with a proverb taken for text. This rebuke of the Pharisee, who thought "the prophet" ought to abhor the "sinner," immediately precedes an account of the eminent women who supported Jesus by their means,—Mary, called Magdalene; Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward; Susanna, "and many others." They "ministered to him of their substance," and possibly the Pharisee and others might naturally suspect him of being among "the ensnared." The fact is strange enough to be genuine, and Luke thinks it important to say that Jesus had healed these ladies of bad spirits and infirmities. Of course it is necessary to divest Gospel anecdotes of much post-resurrectional vesture, and in this case it cannot be credited that Jesus said that the woman's sins were "many," which he could not have known, or that he gave her formal absolution.

The indications of the study of Ecclesiasticus by Jesus are very remarkable. This book appears to have been a sort of nursery in which proverbs were trained for their fruitage in the last Solomon's religious testimo-

\*It is shocking to find this woman named as Mary Magdalene in the "Harmony of the Gospels," appended to the Revised Bible. This deliberate falsehood is carefully elaborated by separating the story as told in Matthew and Mark as another incident, under the heading, "Mary anoints Jesus."



nies. What those testimonies were we cannot easily gather, but it is useful for comparative study to remark the sentences in Ecclesiasticus which correspond, either in thought or phraseology, with those ascribed to Jesus. The broad and the narrow ways barely suggested in "Proverbs" are here developed (Ecclesiasticus iv. 17, 18). "Hide not thy wisdom" (iv. 23, xx. 30). "Say not, 'I have enough (goods) for my life'" (v. 1, xi. 24). "Extol not thyself" (vi. 2). We find the exhortation to judge not (vii. 6); rebuke of much speaking in prayer (14); warning against the lustful gaze (ix. 5, 8); the night cometh when no man can work (xiv. 16-19; cf. Eccles. ix. 10); the proud cast down, the humble exalted (x. 14, xi. 5); one only is good (xviii. 2); swear not (xxiii. 9); forgiven as we forgive (xxviii. 2); treasure rusting and treasure laid up according to the commandments of the Most High (xxix. 10, 11); "Judge of thy neighbor by thyself" (xxxi. 15); the altar-gift and the wronged brother (xxxiv. 18-20); he that seeks the law shall be filled (xxxii. 15); charity and not sacrifice (xxxv. 2).

These resemblances, of which more might be quoted, between teachings ascribed to Jesus and passages in the Wisdom Books, are so important that by the aid of these books some of the confused utterances attributed to him may be made clear.\* Apart from the importations of Paul, and one or two from the epistle to the Hebrews, no reference by the Jesus of the Gos-

\*In the newly-found tablet to which English editors give the title "Logia Jesou," the 5th "Logion," so far as it can be made out, reads: ". . . saith where there are . . . and there is one alone . . . I am with him. Raise the stone and there thou shalt find me, cleave the wood and there am I." The last sentence seems to be based on Eccles. x. 9: "Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; and he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby." The first sentence may be an allusion to the poor man who alone saved the city (Eccles. ix.). There is no such word as "Jesus" in this "Logion," and perhaps it is Wisdom who speaks.

pels to Jahvist books can be shown of similar significance. Combined as his Solomonic ideas are with his homage to Solomon and the Gentile Queen, and followed, as we shall see, by a resuscitation of Solomonic legends in connection with him, it appears clear that Jesus was of the Solomonic and anti-Jahvist school.

It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that Jesus was simply a philosophical and ethical teacher. He cannot be so explained. The fragmentary sayings, so far as discoverable amid their post-resurrectional perversions, have the air of *obiter dicta* from a man engaged in a local propaganda of subversive principles. What the propaganda really was is but dimly discernible under its own subsequent subversion by his ghost, but there are a few sayings not traceable to his predecessors, and beyond the capacity of his contemporaries or his successors, which bring us near to an individual mind, and suggest the general nature of the agitation he caused.

The story of the woman taken in adultery, known to have been in the suppressed "Gospel according to the Hebrews," and by some strange chance preserved in the fourth gospel (viii), I believe to have really occurred. It would have required a first-century Boccaccio to invent such a story, and I cannot discover anything similar in Eastern or in Oriental books. Augustine says that some had removed it from their manuscripts, "I imagine, out of fear that impunity of sin was granted to their wives." It is not likely that any of the earlier fathers, any more than the later, would have invented so dangerous a story.

Another anecdote, preserved only in the fourth Gospel, probably contains some elements of truth, namely,

the words uttered to the Samaritan woman. Who would have been bold enough, even had he been liberal enough, to invent the words: "Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father"? Even in the one Gospel that ventures to preserve it this noble catholicity is immediately retracted (John iv. 22) in a verse which obviously interrupts the idea. That the story is an early one is also suggested by the fact that no reproach to the woman on account of her many husbands is inserted. It is remarkable to find such a story related without any word about sin and forgiveness.

The so-called "Sermon on the Mount" is well named: it is evidently made up of reports of sermons in amplification of sayings of Jesus in the style of the Wisdom Books, among which probably were:

Let your light shine before men. A lamp is not lit to be put under a bushel."

"The lamp of the body is the eye. If thine eye be sound the whole body is illumined; if the eye be diseased the whole body is in darkness. If the inner eye be darkened how great is the darkness."

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

"By their fruits both trees and man are known."

"Each tree is known by its *own* fruit."

"Put not new wine into old wine-skins, lest they burst."

"Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

"Wisdom is justified by her children."

"If any man will be great, let him serve."

"The lowly shall be exalted, the proud humbled."

"Blind guides strain out the gnat, and swallow a camel."

"Give and it shall be given you."

"The measure ye mete shall be measured to you."

"Cast the beam from thine eye before noticing the mote in that of thy neighbour."

The following sentences in the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" do not appear to have been very seriously influenced by post-resurrectional ideas.

"He is a great criminal who hath grieved the spirit of his brother."

"No thank to you if you love them that love you, but there is thank if ye love your enemies and them that hate you." (Cf. Prov. xxix. 17, 29.)

"Be ye never joyful save when you have looked upon your brother in charity."

"Be as lambkins in midst of wolves."

"The son and the daughter shall inherit alike."

"It is happy rather to give than to receive."

"No servant can serve two masters."

"Out of entire heart and out of entire mind."

"What is the profit if a man gain the entire world, and lose his life?"

"Seek from little to wax great, and not from greater to become less."

"Become proved bankers."

"If ye have not been faithful in the little who will give you the great?"

These instructions have no connotations of the end of the world. They appear like the words of a man of the world, but not a man of the people. There is a certain unity in them, indicating a mind more developed than the semi-Jahvist Alexandrian philosophers of the later Wisdom cult, as represented by Jesus Ben Sira's "Wisdom," and by the "Wisdom of Solomon"; also a mind more practical.

But these wise sayings do not convey the full idea of a man whose execution the Sanhedrim would require, nor a man whose resurrection from the grave would be looked for by the populace. These two phenomenal facts imply some strong antagonism to the priesthood and their system. Martyrdoms do not occur for ethical

generalizations, much less for philosophical affirmations. The faith that strikes deep is that which speaks in great denials.

Trying to follow his advice to "Become proved bankers," we may detect in some probable sayings of Jesus a transitional ring, *e. g.*, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." The effort at self-emancipation is still more traceable in certain incidents related in the "Gospel according to the Hebrews":

"He saith, 'If thy brother hath offended in anything and hath made thee amends, seven times in a day receive him.' Simon his disciple said unto him, 'Seven times in a day?' The Lord answered and said unto him, 'I tell thee also unto seventy times seven; for in the prophets likewise, after that they were anointed by the Holy Spirit, utterance of sin was found.'"

"The same day, having beheld a man working on the Sabbath, he said to him, 'Man, if thou knowest what thou dost, blessed art thou: but if thou knowest not, thou art under a curse, and a law-breaker.'"

That a man should regard the Holy Spirit as unable to make men infallible; that he should have discovered immoral utterances in the prophets; that he should regard it as a sign of enlightenment to disregard the Sabbath deliberately and intelligently—this is surely all very striking.

Who, in the second century, could have invented these anecdotes about Jesus? They are not harmonious with the Pauline Epistles; their heretical character is proved by the repudiation of the Gospel containing them, while their genuineness is implicitly confessed by the ultimate suppression of that Gospel. For surely it cannot be supposed that such a work, well known in the fifth century, was lost; nor is there much doubt that any learned rationalist, if permitted the free range

of all the libraries in Rome, without the presence of polite librarians, could bring to light that first-century Gospel, the only one written in Aramaic, the language of Jesus.

But, when we come to consider the mature and positive teachings of Jesus, there may be placed in the front a sentence preserved from the suppressed Gospel by Epiphanius, who writes (*Haer* xxx. 16): "And they say that he both came, and (as their so-called Gospel has it) instructed them that he had come to dissolve the Sacrifices: 'and unless ye cease from sacrificing the wrath shall not cease from you.'" Dr. Nicholson is shocked at this threat, and suspects the Ebionites of having altered what Jesus said. But surely it is a true and grand admonition by one superseding a phantasm of heavenly Egoism, demanding gifts from men for pacification, with the idea of a Father. Dr. Nicholson connects it, no doubt rightly, with Luke xiii. 1-3, which should probably read: "There were some present at that very season who told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered, Think ye these Galileans were sinners rather than all other Galileans because they suffered these things? I tell you, No! And unless ye cease from sacrificing, the Wrath will not cease from you." That is, they would always be haunted by the delusion of a bloodthirsty god, a god of Wrath, and see a judgment, not only in every accident, but in every calamity wrought by fiendish men.

In his quotation from Hosea—"I desire charity, and not sacrifice"—Jesus speaks as if with a transitional accent, as compared with the declaration that sacri-

fices imply deified Wrath. The contempt of Ecclesiastes for "the sacrifice of fools who know not that they are doing evil" (v. 1), has here become a great and far-reaching affirmation, which must have impressed the orthodox Jews as atheism. For, although there are passages in several psalms and in the prophets which disparage sacrifice, they were all interpreted by the Rabbins, as now by Christian theologians, as meaning their purification and spiritualization—by no means their abolition. Indeed, this higher interpretation of sacrifices appears to have given them fresh lease; and in the time of Jesus, when to the priesthood remained only control over their religious ordinances, the sacrifices were apparently preserved with increased rigour. Jesus himself, unless the gopeller (Matt. v. 23, 24) has softened his language, had at one time only demanded that none should offer a gift at the altar until he had done justice to any who had aught against him. But a remarkable passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews (x. 5) represents Jesus as going to the world with a quotation from Psalm xl. 6, 7, for a clause of which a parenthesis is given, saying:

"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not  
 (Thou hast furnished me this body)—  
 In whole burnt offerings and sin offerings thou delighted not:  
 Then said I (in that chapter of the book it is written for me),  
 'Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.' "

The sentence preserved by Eusebius, however, shows that his attitude toward sacrifices was not merely to "lift" from men (Heb. x. 9, *ἀναρπάζει*) the burden of sacrifice, but to denounce it as an offering to the devil. "Unless ye cease from sacrificing, the Wrath shall not cease from you."

In this sentence "the Wrath" ( $\eta \delta\rho\gamma\eta$ ) is clearly a personification. It does not in the same form occur elsewhere in the Bible. Matthew and Mark report John the Baptist as speaking of "the impending wrath," and Paul occasionally gives "Wrath" a quasi-personification (e. g., "children of Wrath," Eph. ii. 1-3). These expressions, and the "destroyer" Abaddon or Apollyon, of Revelations ix. and (xii. 12) the devil "in great temper" ( $\thetaυμ\delta\nu$ ), all show that the Jewish mind had become familiar with the idea of a dark and evil power quite detached from official relation to Jahveh, no longer "the wrath of God" executing divine judgments, but organized Violence, eager to afflict mankind as the creation of his enemy.

In the "Wisdom of Solomon" (xviii.) there is a complete picture of the two opposing Destroyers. The divine destroyer ("thine Almighty Word") leaps down with his sword and slays the firstborn of Egypt; the antagonist Destroyer begins the same kind of work among the Israelites in Egypt, but Moses by prayer and the "propitiation of incense" sets himself "against the Wrath" and overcomes him,— "not with physical strength, nor force of arms, but with a word." The incense used by Moses to put the demon to flight recalls the "perfume" used by Tobit, on the advice of the angel, to put to flight Asmodeus; and Asmodeus is notoriously the Persian Aêshma, a name meaning "Wrath," who occupies so large space in the Parsi scriptures.\* The especial antagonist of Aêshma "of the

\* Asmodeus (identified as Aêshma by West, *Bundahis* xxv. 15, n. 10) has (*Tobit* vi. 13) slain seven men who successively married Sara, whom he (and Tobit) loved, and in *Bundahis* Aêshma has seven powers with which he will slay seven Kayan heroes. But one is preserved, as *Tobit* is. (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. V, p. 108.) Darmesteter says: "One of the foremost amongst the Drvants (storm-fiends), their leader in their onsets, is Aêshma, 'the raving,' 'a fiend with the wounding spear.' Originally a mere epithet of



wounding spear," is Sraosha, "the incarnate Word, a mighty-speared god." (Farvardin Yast, 85.) As Moses overcomes "the Wrath" "with a word," Zoroaster is given a form of words to conquer Aêshma ("Praise to Armaiti, the propitious!") and the Vendidâd says, "The fiend becomes weaker and weaker at every one [repetition] of those words." The Zamyâd Yast says, "The Word of falsehood smites, but the Word of truth shall smite it." Aêshma is the child of Ahriman, the Deceiver of the World, and a Parsi would recognize him in the declaration ascribed to Jesus, "The devil is a liar and so is his father." (John viii. 44.)

That Jesus regarded the whole realm of evil as absolutely antagonistic to the Good is reflected in the epistle "To the Hebrews." There his mission is to abolish the devil (ii. 14), which is very different from abolishing death (2 Tim. i. 10). For a long time the devil was suppressed in the "Lord's Prayer," but in that brief collection of Talmudic ejaculations the only original thing is, "Deliver us from the evil one." In the Clementine Homilies Jesus is quoted as having said, "The evil one is the tempter," and "Give not a pretext to the evil one." Nay, the single clause preserved in Matthew, that it is an enemy that sows tares,—these being as much parts of nature as corn,—is a sentence that divides the Ahrimanic creation from the Ahuramazdean creation as clearly and profoundly as anything ascribed to Zoroaster.

Theological harmonists have for centuries been at work on the contrarious doctrines of all scriptures, and even among the Parsis some kind of metaphysical alli-

the storm fiend, Aêshma was afterwards converted into an abstract, the demon of rage and anger, and became an expression for all moral wickedness, a mere name of Ahriman."

ance has taken place between the Kingdoms of Good and Evil. Devout Christians find it quite consistent that one person of the trinity should say, "I create good and I create evil," and another person of the trinity should say of natural evil, "An enemy hath done this." But no such harmony existed in the Jerusalem of Jesus. Under a teaching that symbolized the deity as the Sun, shining alike on the thankful and thankless, individually, desiring no sacrifices, and concentrating human effort against the forces of evil in nature, in society—the evil principle—Jahveh falls like lightning from heaven. Like "the blameless man" of the "Wisdom of Solomon," Jesus "sets himself against the Wrath," however sanctified as the Wrath of God, and sees all sacrifices as eucharists of the Adversary. He not only repudiates the name "Jahveh," but tells the official agents of Jahvism that their god is his devil. (John viii. 44).

Of course one can only refer cautiously to anything in the fourth Gospel, for it is a composite book, but it contains, as I believe, passages or fragments of the early apostolic theology, wherein dualism, until crushed by Paul, was prominent, and the good God represented in hard struggle with Satan for the rescue of mankind.

This aspect of the teaching of Jesus cannot be dealt with here as its importance deserves. We live in an age whose clergy deal apologetically with the prominence of the Adversary of Man in the teachings of Jesus. For this fundamental principle of Jesus Jewish monotheism has been substituted. But there are many records to attest that the moral perfection and benevo-

lence of the deity, which is certainly inconsistent with his omnipotence, or his "permission" of the tares in nature, was the only new principle of religion affirmed by Jesus; and, also, that it was so subversive of sacrifices, priesthood, and the very foundations of the temple—all dependent on Jahveh's menaces—that the execution of Jesus appears more rationally explicable by this dualistic propaganda than by any other ascribed to him.

It was the birth of a new God that moved Jerusalem: a unique God in Judea—and almost unknown in modern Christendom—namely, a GOOD God. As the Arabian gospel significantly relates, the Eastern Wise Men came to the cradle of Jesus as that of a saviour "prophe-sied by Zoroaster,"—the one prophet who separated deity from the realm of evil.

It is now even unorthodox to deny that the agonies of nature are part of the providence of God: but herein orthodoxy is in direct antagonism to what it maintains as the authentic teaching of Jesus. "Then was brought unto him one possessed of a devil, blind and dumb; and he healed him, insomuch that the dumb man spake and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, Is this the Son of David? But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This man doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. And knowing their thoughts he said, Every dominion divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand; and if Satan casteth out Satan, he is divided against himself: how then shall his dominion stand?"

Those therefore who believe these to be the words of Jesus, and yet believe blindness, dumbness, and other

physical diseases to be in any sense of divine providence or even permission, are believing in a God whom Jesus implicitly pronounced to be Satan.

And those who do not believe that Jesus healed such diseases, nor believe in a personal Satan, may still regard the above legend as characteristic. The separation of Good and Evil into eternally antagonistic dominions could not have been affirmed by any Jew other than Jesus (or John the Baptist, probably however an Oriental dervish.) Though the Jews popularly believed in Beelzebub and other devils, they were all regarded as under the omnipotence and control of Jahveh, who proudly claimed that he was the creator of all evil, and who even had lying spirits in his employ.

Whether Jesus believed in the personality of the evil principle, in any strict sense, may be questioned. He may have meant no more than Emerson, who pictured ill health as a ghoulish preying on the heart and life of its victims. Memories of similar teachings may have given rise to the tales of healing afterwards associated with Jesus. But the personality of evil is a more philosophical generalization than the personification of a power representing both the good and the evil phenomena of nature. Evil acts in concrete forms, and often in combinations of forces which can not be analysed and distributed into particular causes. History records instances of moral epidemics driving whole peoples as if down a steep place into seas of blood, as if by some pandemoniac possession, impressing the ordinarily humane along with the vindictive, the lawless and destructive. A great deal of crime seems disinterested, and still more is due to the fanatical inspiration of cruel deities, whose names become in other religions the

names of devils. Out of manifold experiences in the tragical annals of mankind came the terrible Ahriman.

That Jesus did not adopt the Zoroastrian theology is shown in his hostility to sacrifices which are of vital importance in the Parsi system, though they were not of the cruel kind; nor, as we have seen, were they to propitiate gods, but to assist them. Moreover, belief in Ahriman had naturally evoked a militant spirit in the war against evil, and Jesus seems to have for this reason separated himself from the dervish, John the Baptist, whose violence had landed him in prison. The incident (Matt. xi.) is so wrapped in post-resurrectional phraseology that any rational interpretation must be conjectural; but there is a certain accent about it which can hardly be explained as part of the evangelical doctrine that the Baptist was a mere preface to Christ. Jesus seems to regard John the Baptizer as the ablest man of his time (verse 11), but as of a revolutionary spirit, as if the reformation were a siege against some political kingdom or throne. Violent people had been pressing around John, and the cause of spiritual liberation had suffered. There was too much of the old law with its thunders, too much of fiery Elijah, surviving in John. The ideal is not a thing to be clutched at, or taken by force, but all of the conditions—every tittle—must be fulfilled. (Luke xvi. 17.)

This is in substance a doctrine of evolution as opposed to revolution, and my interpretation may be suspected of rationalistic anachronism; but it must be remembered that the Golden Age behind Israel was an epoch of Peace, which was represented in the ancient name of their city (Salem), and of its greatest monarch, Solomon. The prophets had long been painting the

visionary dawn with pigments of that glorious sunset. Solomon, true to his name, had allowed dismemberment of his kingdom rather than go to war against rebellion; and it is noticeable that in the apostolic age there was a principle against carnal weapons, the Epistle to the Hebrews (xii. 3, 4) especially reminding the brethren of the patient endurance of Jesus, and commending their not having "resisted unto blood." This peacefulness of Jesus had indeed become a basis of the doctrine that the triumph of Jesus over Satan was conditioned on his not using any force, or other satanic weapon. Those who took to the sword would perish thereby—*i. e.*, remain in sheol.

But in a realm of practically oppressive and cruel superstitions, established and consecrated, an absolute appeal to the moral sentiment cannot escape being revolutionary. The American Anti-Slavery Society were non-resistants; their great leader, William Lloyd Garrison, thus apostrophised his "elder brother" of Jerusalem:

"O Jesus! noblest of patriots, greatest of heroes, most glorious of all martyrs! Thine is the spirit of universal liberty and love—of uncompromising hostility to every form of injustice and wrong. But not with weapons of death dost thou assault thy enemies, that they may be vanquished or destroyed; for thou dost not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against 'principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places'; therefore hast thou put on the whole armor of God, having the loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and thy feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and going forth

to battle with the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit! Worthy of imitation art thou, in overcoming the evil that is in the world; for by the shedding of thine own blood, but not even the blood of thy bitterest foe, shalt thou at last obtain a universal victory."

So, across the ages, does deep answer unto deep. But all the same Garrison's feet were unconsciously shod with the preparation of the gospel of war, even as those of Jesus were. In a realm of consecrated wrong every appeal to the moral sentiment is necessarily revolutionary; far more so than physical rebellion, against which preponderant moral forces combine with the immoral, as being a greater evil than the orderly wrong assailed. Satan cannot be cast out by Beelzebub. A god of wrath, enthroned on reeking altars, could better stand the axe of the Baptist than the sunbeam of Jesus, the arrow feathered with gentleness and culture. John the Baptist was not a religious martyr; he suffered from a ruler quite indifferent to his religion, with whose personal affairs he had interfered. But Jesus suffered because he proclaimed, with irresistible eloquence, a new religion, one involving practically the existing institutions of the priesthood, and their whole moral system. It was virtually the setting up of a new deity in place of Jahveh, reason in place of the Bible, the heart worshipping in spirit and in truth in place of the temple, and humanizing the moral sentiment—turning the conventional morality to "dead works" (Heb. vi. 1). He expected the reform to be peaceful!

Rousseau's remark that Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus like a god, has in it a truth more important than those who often quote it recognise. Jesus

died, legendarily, so much like a god that it is difficult to make out just what happened to the man. Strong arguments have been made to prove that he did not die at all on "the cross" (a word unknown to the New Testament),\* and that Pilate not only "set himself" to save Jesus (John xix. 12), but succeeded. There may have been from the stake a despairing cry, afterwards shaped after a line from a psalm, but it can hardly be determined whether this may not have been part of the first post-resurrectional doctrine that the Son must be absolutely left by his divine Father, and pass unaided through the ordeal of Satan, in order to fulfil the conditions of a return from death. It is true, however, that this primitive idea had almost vanished when the earliest Gospel was written, and, although a relic of it may have been preserved by tradition, there is an equal probability that Jesus did utter at the stake a cry of despair. The whole miserable murderous affair, unforeseen and disappointing, must have appeared to him a horrible display of diabolism; and even after his friends believed in his resurrection, and saw in the tragedy a sacrifice, they regarded it a sacrifice hateful to his Father, and exacted only by the Devil.

Did he pray, "Father forgive them, they know not what they do"? Only Luke reports this; its suppression by the other Gospels suggests that its doctrinal significance was perceived. I heard a preacher in the church of the Jesuits at Rome argue that Judas himself is now in Paradise, because Jesus thus prayed for

\* The word translated "cross" is *σταυρός*, a stake. The christian cross began its development by the carving of a figure of Jesus on the stake, which required a support for the arms. Protestantism, by removing the figure, has left the wooden fetish, which, however, has been invested with Symbolical meanings, some derived from the various crosses held sacred in many countries long before Christ.



those who slew him, and the prayer of the Son of God must have been answered. There is no apparent dogmatic purpose in this incident, and it may be true.

The story of his confiding his mother to the disciple "whom he loved," told only by John, is evidently meant to complete the assumption of a special favoritism towards that disciple, who is the type of the good Spirit on one side of Jesus in contrast with Judas, Satan's agent, on the other. The two are equally unhistorical and allegorical. John and Judas became the good and evil Wandering Jews of mediæval folklore.

The first Solomon had perished as a teacher of wisdom when he was summoned from his tomb to utter the Jahvism of the "Wisdom of Solomon": the second and last Solomon was forever buried on the day when Mary Magdalene saw his apparition, and cried, "My master!" From that time may be dated the loss of the man Jesus, and restoration in Christ of the Jahvism whose burden the wise teacher had endeavored to lift from the heart and mind of the people. *Vicisti Jahveh!*

## CHAPTER XIX.

### POSTSCRIPTA.

Early in the year 1896 a company of Jews performed at the Novelty Theatre, London, in the Hebrew language, a drama entitled "King Solomon." It was an humble affair, and only about three score in the audience—I and one very dear to me being apparently the only "Gentiles" present. The drama was mainly the legend of the Judgment of Solomon and that of the visit of the Queen of Sheba, both conventionalized, and performed in an automatic way, no spark of human passion or emotion animating either of the women claiming the babe, or the Queen of Sheba. The part of Solomon was acted by a fine-looking man, who went through it in the same perfunctory way that characterized Joseph Meyer, the Oberammergau Christ, as he appears to the undevout critical eye. Such has the biblical Solomon become in Europe.

In the same week I attended a *matinée* of "Aladdin" in Drury Lane Theatre, which was crowded, mainly with children, who were filled with delight by the fairy play. The leading figures were elaborated from Solomonic lore. A beautiful being in dazzling white raiment and crown appears to Aladdin; she is a combination of the Queen of Sheba and Wisdom; she presents the youth with a ring (symbol of Solomon's espousal with Wisdom, or as the Abyssinians say, with the

Queen of Sheba) ; by means of this ring he obtains the Wonderful Lamp (the reflected or terrestrial wisdom). An Asmodeus, well versed in modern jugglery, charms the audience with his tricks and antics, before proceeding to get hold of the magic ring of Aladdin, and commanding the lamp, which he succeeds in doing, as he succeeded with Solomon. This is what legendary Solomon has become in Europe.

In European Folklore, Solomon and his old adversary, Asmodeus, now better known as Mephistopheles, have long been blended. Solomon's seal was the mediæval talisman to which the demon eagerly responds. The Wisdom involved is all a matter of magic. It is wonderful that so little recognition has been given in literature to the epical dignity and beauty of the biblical legends of Solomon. In early English literature there was at one time a tendency to ascribe to Solomon various proverbs not in the Bible. In one old manuscript he is credited with saying :

“Save a thief from the gallows and he'll help to hang thee.”

Also,

“Many a one leads a hungry life,  
And yet must needs wed a wife.”

In Chaucer's “Melibæus” there are ten proverbs ascribed to Solomon which are not in the Bible. But generally it is Solomon the magician who has interested the poets. In the old work, “Salomon and Saturn,” the wise man informs Saturn that the most potent of all talismans is the Bible :

“Golden is the Word of God,  
Stored with gems ;  
It hath silver leaves ;

Each one can,  
Through spiritual grace  
A Gospel relate."

And it is further said, "Each (leaf) will subdue devils." In a profounder vein Solomon says: "All Evil is from Fate; yet a wise-minded man may moderate every fate with self-help, help of friends, and the divine spirit."

In Prospero burying his Book, Shakespeare seems to have followed the rabbinical legend that after Solomon by his written formulas had made the devils serve him, in building the temple and other works, he resolved to practice magic no more, and buried his book. But the devils said to the people, "he only ruled you by his book," and pointed out where it was hidden; so they left the prophets and followed magic.

At what time the notion arose that Solomon had demonic familiars does not appear, but the story in 1 Kings iii. of the gift of wisdom has some appearance of a reclamation for the deity of a credit that was popularly ascribed to a rival power. However this may be, there is a popular habit of tracing unusual human performances to Satan. As I write this paragraph (in Paris) I note a theatrical placard announcing "les sataniques devins" of Willian de Torre, a man who cries out the name and address you secretly select in the Paris Directory. Why not advertise the divinations as "angelic" instead of satanic? The heavenly beings have somehow no great reputation for cleverness. Probably this is due to the long association of intellectuality and science with heresy.

The late Lord Lytton ("Owen Meredith") wrote a

brief poem on a version given him by Robert Browning of the story in my Preface, of Solomon leaning on his staff long after he was dead: a worm gnaws the end of the staff and Solomon falls, crumbled to dust, and nothing left visible but his crown. A poem by Leigh Hunt, "The Inevitable" (in some editions, "The Angel of Death"), tells of a man who, in terror of Death, entreats Solomon to transport him to the remotest mountain of Cathay. Solomon does so.

"Solomon wished and the man vanished straight;  
 Up comes the Terror, with his orbs of fate:  
 'Solomon,' with a lofty voice said he,  
 'How came that man here, wasting time with thee?  
 I was to fetch him ere the close of day,  
 From the remotest mountain of Cathay.  
 Solomon said, bowing him to the ground,  
 'Angel of death, there will the man be found.'"

The story of the Fall of Man, in Genesis, so fascinated Schopenhauer that he was ready to forgive the Bible all its blunders. The whole world, said the great pessimist, looks like a vast accumulation of evil developed from some absurdly small misstep. And this misstep was precisely in accord with the philosophy of Schopenhauer, who says that the great mistake of the universe is "consciousness."

That there were Schopenhaueresque ideas among some of the Solomonic school may be seen in Koheleth (Ecclesiastes), who says, "Be not overwise; why commit suicide?" (vii. 16.) I have remarked elsewhere that the story of the serpent in Eden may have been put there as a fling at Solomon and the scientific people, but on the other hand it may be argued that it was a fable devised by the Solomonic school to show how

Jahveh was outwitted in his attempt to breed a race of idiots, for fear mankind might become as clever as himself. For it was not the serpent that deceived Adam and Eve, but Jahveh, in saying the forbidden fruit was fatal; the serpent told them the truth.

The folk-tale that Solomon's staff was gnawed by a worm, and his crowned body reduced to dust, suggests the idea of grandeur laid low by some insignificant form, and in the same way Jahveh's creation was overthrown by a worm. This humiliation of Jahveh has been now somewhat lessened by the theory that Satan took the form of the serpent, which Dante calls the worm, but nowhere in the Bible is there any confusion of the reptile in Eden with any devil. "If," says Kalisch, "the serpent represented Satan it would be extremely surprising that the former only was cursed, and that the latter is not even alluded to." In Genesis the extreme cleverness of the serpent is recognized, and the truth of his statement to Eve admitted, while Jahveh is shown in the ridiculous light of having his deception about the fruit exposed by a worm, and betaking himself to curses all round. These be thy gods, O Christians—for the Jews absolutely ignored the tale in all their scriptures, and in the New Testament Paul alone alludes to it.\*

The serpent in Eden is evidently the symbol of wisdom, of medical art—Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek—lifted in the wilderness by Moses, and recognised by Jesus ("Be wise as serpents"), with whom as an up-lifted healer of mankind the serpent-symbol was associated. But all of this is in contradiction to the curses

\* Paul (1 Tim. ii. 14), supposing him to have written the passage, uses the story simply to justify the subordination of woman to man, but a witty lady remarked to me that according to the story in Genesis no harm came to the world by Eve's eating the fruit of knowledge. It was only by the man's eating it that the thorns sprang up.

of Jahveh on the serpent, and on those to whom the serpent brought wisdom. The fable, therefore, seems to be composed of two antagonistic parts; it is a Solomonic anti-Jahvist fable with an anti-Solomonic moral.

In the Parsi religion the fall of man was due to the first man having been deceived by the Evil One into ascribing the good things in creation to him—the Evil One.

In the same way the Christian ascribes to the Evil One man's first taste of wisdom—the knowledge of good and evil—and believes his first step above the brute to be a fall.

In the Parsi religion that fall of man, by a lie, was recovered from by the creation of a new man. But in Christendom man has not recovered from his fall, nor can he ever recover from it so long as he disregards the new man's word, "Be wise as serpents," and continues to confuse his wisdom with diabolism.

Only through the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and of the eternal antagonism between them, can the tree of Life be reached.

In a Gnostic legend Solomon was summoned from his tomb and asked, "Who first named the name of God?" He answered, "The Devil."

Did reason permit belief in a personal devil, one might recognise his supreme artifice in thus sheltering all the desolating cruelties of men, all the discords and wars that have degraded mankind into nations glorying in their ensigns of inhumanity, under a divine order. Thenceforth the enemy of man became God's Devil, and whoso accuses the scourges of man accuses the scourges of God.

Under the teaching of the Second Solomon his personal friends could see in his tragical death a blow of the Devil aimed at God, who was trying to subdue that lawless one, for whose existence or actions God was in no sense responsible. But this was a transient glimpse. The Devil's God was soon seen on his throne above the murderers of the great man; the stake set up by the lynchers was shaped into a symbolical cross; and all the cowardly, treacherous, murderous leaders, and the vile lynchers, are raised into agents and priests of God, presiding at a solemn rite and sacrifice for the salvation of mankind.

Instead of salvation a curse fell on mankind with that lie, and there are no signs of recovery from it. By the combination of Church and State there has been evolved a new man—a Christian restoration of deceived Yima—and no theological development touches that misbeliever in every believer. The Unitarian, the Theist, in their doctrine of a divine cosmos, the optimist, the pantheist, do but rehabilitate and philosophically reinvest the lie that the diseases and agonies in nature and in history are parts of a divinely ordered universe. They, too, must see Judas and the lynchers carrying out the plans of God. What then can they say of our contemporary betrayers of justice, the national lynchers, who are crucifying humanity throughout the world? These, too, carrying along their missionaries, are projecting God into history! But it is the God who was first named by the Devil, as the risen Solomon said, not the "Eloi," the source only of good, whom the great friend of man saw not in all that wild chaos of violence amid which he perished, and his sublime religion with him.



When Jahveh swears "by his holiness" (as in Ps. lxxxix. 35, Amos iv. 2), this holiness is not to be interpreted as moral, or in any human sense. It relates to ancient philosophical ideas concerning the spiritual and the material worlds. The supreme head of the spiritual world is so far above the material world in majesty that he cannot come in contact with matter, though this august "holiness" has nothing to do with his moral character. Indeed deities were in all countries considered quite above the moral obligations of men. Jahveh's "holiness" required the employment of mediators in creation—the Spirit of God brooding over the waters, Wisdom the "undefiled" master-builder, the Word—in each of whom is some image of his quasi-physiological "holiness," his transcendent immateriality.

It was amid these ancient conceptions that the various cults arose which attempt to please and conciliate gods by ceremonial observances, runes, recited formulas of petition or adulation, all based on the awful "holiness" that doth hedge about a god, and concerned with points of heavenly etiquette, without any implication of a moral nature in those distant celestial beings. In Euripides' "Iphigenia" (line 20) it is said: "Sometimes the worship of the gods, not being conducted with exactness, overturns one's life." In the same vein Koheleth (Ecclesiastes, v. 1, 2): "Keep thy foot when thou goest into the house of God; for to draw nigh to him with attention is better than to bring the sacrifices of fools who know not that they are (? may be) doing wrong. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter a word before God; for God is

in heaven, and thou on earth; therefore let thy words be few."

But in every race ethical development reaches a stage in which these majestic beings, concerned only about their worship according to etiquette, are challenged. Thus in the "Cyclops" of Euripides (xxxv. 3-5), Ulysses says: "O Jove, guardian of strangers, behold these things; for if thou regardest them not, thou, Jove, being nought, art vainly esteemed a god."

From the first Solomon to the last, the whole intellectual development in Judea, which I have called Solomonic, means the subjection of all conceptions of the divine nature and laws to the moral sentiment and the reason of man. It was no denial of invisible beings, or of man's relation to the universe, but a demand that all definitions and conceptions should be approached through science, experience and wisdom.

Solomon, and the Second Solomon, rest in their unknown graves; their wisdom is corrupted; but their genius survives in the earth. Of old it was said God looked down from heaven on the children of men, and found that there was "none that doeth good, no not one." But it is now man who, with eyes illumined by the brave and cultured Solomons of all lands and ages, looks upon the gods to see if there be one that doeth good. The best of them are defended only by a plea that evil is the mask of their benevolence. But it is not humanly moral to do evil that good may come.

Our great Omar Khayyám, by Fitzgerald's help, says :

"O Thou, who Man of baser earth didst make,  
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:  
For all the Sin wherewith the face of Man  
Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!"

The agreement may be fair enough so far as it concerns Sin, in the theological sense, but no Omnipotence, with unlimited choice of means to ends, could be forgiven for the agonies of nature, even did they result in benefits,—as generally they do not, so far as is known to the experience of mankind.

It may be, as the American orator said, “An honest god’s the noblest work of man”; and innumerable hearts enshrine fair personal ideals under uncomprehended names for deity; but each such private ideal is unconsciously antagonistic to every “collectivist” deity to whom the creation or the government of the world is ascribed.

The human heart kneels before its vision, and with Mary Magdalene cries *Rabboni, My Master*; but Theology recognizes only the perfunctory Rabbi, and carries her beloved off into union with thunder-god, war-god, or with a deified predatory Cosmos. Yet will not the heart be bereaved of its vision; it still sees a smile of tenderness in the universe. And philosophy, though it regard that smile as a reflection of the heart’s own love, may with all the more certainty itself find a religion in this maternal divinity in the earth, ever aspiring to its own supreme humanity.

Solomon passes, Jesus passes, but the Wisdom they loved as Bride, as Mother, abides, however veiled in fables. She is still inspiring the unfinished work of creation, and her delight is with the children of men.



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